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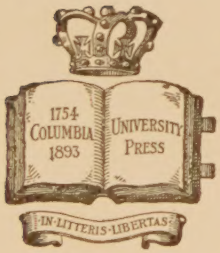

New York

THE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS

1912

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Set up and electrotyped. Published March, 1912.

Norwood Press
J. S. Cushing Co. — Berwick & Smith Co.
Norwood, Mass., U.S.A.

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PREFATORY NOTE

The lectures printed in this volume were given at the suggestion of President Butler, under the auspices of the Department of Classical Philology, in the spring of 1911. It was the purpose of the Department, as set forth in the first announcement of the lectures, that they should have special reference to the universality and permanent power of Greek Literature. This idea, therefore, has been made prominent throughout, though more emphasis is laid upon it in some lectures than in others, according as the subject matter or the bent of the lecturer made such emphasis natural.

In a series of lectures written by different people, who in many cases had not been able to consult one another, some lack of unity is to be expected. This is not, we hope, sufficiently marked to prevent the volume from being of use and interest both to students and to the general reader.

The Department of Classical Philology would express its sincere thanks to the scholars from other universities who have so cordially lent their aid.

J. R. WHEELER,
E. D. PERRY,
GONZALEZ LODGE,
Committee of the Department.

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THE STUDY OF GREEK LITERATURE

Professor Mahaffy for many years made it his mission to broaden the narrow Hellenism of the universities by emphasizing the significance of authors and subjects beyond the classical pale. Perhaps it is time to remind ourselves that the illumination of these satellite studies is after all a reflected glory from the central sun.

The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* once stood in splendid isolation at the entrance to Greek literature, like the twin lions at the gateway of the Mycenaean citadel. But now we approach them through a long vista of Minoan 1, Minoan 2, Minoan 3, and with attention already fagged by the higher Homeric criticism and minds befuddled with speculative anthropology and craniological statistics. Bestowing a perfunctory glance upon the stately beauty of the Propylaea, we press within to ransack the tombs for shreds and fragments with which to patch our philological restorations. Science of mythology, science of religion, science of language, Homeric criticism, palaeography, epigraphy, papyrology — endless are the subsidiary disciplines which we have elaborated for the interpretation of Greek literature. But the thought, the imagination, the diction, of the authors we take for granted — a little weary, perhaps, of hearing Aristides called "the just," Aeschylus "the sublime," Sophocles "the perfect," Plato "the divine," Demosthenes "the eloquent." And if we extend the purview beyond Demosthenes and Aristotle, the range of the studies accessory to classical Greek literature is still more appalling. The fragments of the Alexandrians are collected and reconstructed, the secondary Greek writers

of the Roman empire are minutely analyzed and traced back to their sources in lost Alexandrian models; the Greek administration of Egypt is scrutinized down to the last tax receipt; the Byzantine empire is rehabilitated, and the endless waste of Byzantine literature surveyed and registered in special *Zeitschriften*, and the long history of the κοινή is followed till it reëmerges from the Turkish katabothron as the καθαρεύουσα of to-day. What Athenian tourist who possesses a smattering of Greek is not thrilled by the thought that the words which he overhears in an Athenian street may be the words which three thousand years ago made music on the lips of Odysseus and Nausicaa? Who that turns the pages of the Palatine Anthology is not moved to read side by side with epigrams that date from Marathon and Salamis verses that were almost contemporaneous with Cressy and Poitiers? What student of any part of this, the longest and noblest unbroken literary tradition in the world, is not sustained and inspired by the consciousness of its relation to the glorious whole? And yet there would be some loss in this enlargement of our horizon, if it led us to forget that all that differentiates Hellenic Philology from Sinology, Aegyptology, Assyriology, or the archaeology of the American Indian, is the supreme beauty and significance of a few poets and orators and thinkers who can be counted on the fingers of the two hands and who, if we except Homer, lived within two or three centuries. It is the originality, the stimulating power, the indefectible charm of classic Greek literature, that vitalizes all these erudite accretions of philology and archaeology and post-classical literature and history that have associated themselves with it in our class rooms.

The world of scholarship is large enough to maintain every type of specialist. But the student of humane letters must be on his guard against the specialist's distorted perspective. If Greek literature is to exercise its power of redemption upon us and retain any significance for our hurried and distracted

culture, we must acquiesce in the miracle that it begins with the muse of Homer, born full-panoplied of the brain and poetic genius of early Hellas. It is clear that the Homeric Pantheon, the legends, the tale of Troy, the similes, the epithets, the perfected harmonies of the hexameter, imply a long prehistoric or embryonic evolution. "Ages of heroes fought and fell that Homer in the end might tell," and generations of singers must have left the vibration of their souls in the timbre of the Homeric lyre. But as Wordsworth warns us:—

> No tongue is able to rehearse
> One measure, Orpheus, of thy verse.
> Musaeus, stationed with his lyre
> Supreme among the Olympian quire,
> Is for the dwellers upon earth
> Mute as a lark ere morning's birth.

Prehomeric bards and prehomeric ethnology are irretrievably buried in the dark backward and abysm of time, and excessive preoccupation with the pseudo-sciences that seek to reconstruct them on insufficient evidence will merely distort our image of Homer in a false focus. Homer was an end as well as a beginning, but for us he is only a beginning. Starting from Homer, we may understand, if not explain, the supremacy of Greek literature. Homer himself we cannot explain; but if we abandon ourselves to him we shall understand him better than those who try to explain him.

Macaulay's explanation was that Homer is the childhood of humanity, and that childhood is more poetic than maturity because it really believes in Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf, while we can only strive to make believe. But Homer is no more a child than he is a savage. Homeric poetry expresses not the childhood of humanity, but that heroic and poetic adolescence of the Greek race, when the brave new world was full of strange people and curious things, when infinite horizons lured to heroic adventures on mysterious

seas, when it was worth while to die for a beautiful face or to avenge a friend, when passionate feeling and poetic sensibility still predominated over the lucidity, the power of abstraction and generalization and analysis, and the rhetorical fluency that were to prove the distinguishing and abiding endowment of the race.

For though the Greeks produced in Homer, Sappho, Pindar, and Aeschylus four of the world's supreme poets, the romantic imagination, the poetic intoxication of a Marlowe, Shakespeare, Shelley, and Keats is not, on a survey of their whole history, their dominant quality.

Without unduly pressing the comparison, we may conceive the Greek genius, as Coleridge portrays himself in the *Ode to Dejection*, divided between the two impulses of poetic creation and reflective analysis, and gradually allowing the first to be swallowed up in the second. When we pass from Pindar to Simonides, from Aeschylus to Sophocles, we have already crossed the line which divides the highest imaginative poetry from the poetry of finished and perfect art. In passing from Sophocles to Euripides, we enter the world of self-conscious reflection and sophisticated rhetoric, a rhetoric illumined with many an exquisite gleam of romance, but still the dialectical rhetoric on which the Greek nation has lived for two thousand years. The muse of poetry had fled before her sister philosophy, never to return. Reflection and analysis are the source of many of the greatest achievements of the Greek mind, but the Greek genius might well have apostrophized this all-absorbing divinity as Coleridge did: —

> But oh! each visitation
> Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
> My shaping spirit of Imagination.
>
> * * * * * * * * *
>
> Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
> And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

I am far from deploring this inevitable evolution, as is done by Nietzsche and Landor, who fiercely denounce Socrates and Plato and all their works, and maintain that the only true Greece is that younger Hellas to which Pindar and Herodotus wistfully looked back: —

> Before the sophist brood had overlaid
> The last spark of man's consciousness with words.

If Socrates and Plato and Aristotle could come only through the sacrifice of the gift of creative poetic imagination, the price was well paid. The Latin and German races might have produced an indigenous poetry of their own. But though, as Mill says, philosophy is abundantly amenable to general causes, it is probable that but for Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle and what they represent, our European world would never have developed either logic, philosophy, or science. As it is, we have the philosophy and the poetry too, for the poetry produced by the Greek race before abstraction dimmed imagination and analysis confused the instinctive sense of beauty is not a few Coleridgean fragments. It is the one great body of poetry in the world that equally satisfies the imagination and the reason, in which form and content are perfectly balanced and harmonized; the one poetry that realizes Plotinus's definition of beauty — the irradiation of the particular by the universal; in short, the one poetry that is classic in the true sense of that much misapprehended word.

Yet the first quality that attracts a modern reader in Homer is a certain fiery speed and divine intensity, differing from the bitter concentrated passion of Dante, but equally grateful to the soul's innate longing for emotional expansion. This is the *energeia* celebrated by Aristotle. This is the Homeric fire so eloquently praised by Pope of all persons, and more recently by Professor Mackail. This is the spirit Elysian that did fill the bosom of Chapman with such a flood of soul as swept Keats's little sonnet bark out upon the ocean of

poesie. This is old Homer's sting that "stirs the sluggish pulse like wine." It is the supralunar intoxication of song which the Neoplatonists, in the endeavor to defend Homer against Plato's censure, distinguish from the infralunar inebriety of sense. "Since I read that book," said an old French critic, "men are fifteen feet high and I cannot sleep." Unless Homer affects you in that way, you have not read him. He can hardly affect you so in a lecturer's quotations. You must reread for yourselves the great tonic passages. But as a faint indication of my meaning I will quote two illustrations of the delight of battle which the Tennysonian Ulysses had drunk with his peers far on the ringing plains of windy Troy. The first in Chapman's translation (*Il.* 13. 72): —

> This Telamonius thus received, so too my heart, my hands
> Burn with desire to toss my lance, each foot beneath me stands
> Bare on bright fire to use his speed, my heart is raised so high,
> That to encounter Hector's self I long insatiately.

The other, Ajax's defiance to Hector, no translation can reproduce. A close version runs: —

> But for thee thyself I declare that the hour draws nigh when in thy flight, thou shalt lift thy hands in prayer to Zeus and all the immortal Gods, that swifter than hawks may be the full-maned steeds that shall sweep thee back to Ilion in a whirlwind of dust o'er the plain: —
>
> *σοὶ δ' αὐτῷ φημὶ σχεδὸν ἔμμεναι, ὁππότε φεύγων*
> *ἀρήσῃ Διὶ πατρὶ καὶ ἄλλοις ἀθανάτοισιν*
> *θάσσονας ἰρήκων ἔμεναι καλλίτριχας ἵππους,*
> *οἵ σε πόλινδ' οἴσουσι κονίοντες πεδίοιο.*

In all this we are, as Matthew Arnold would say, praising Homer too much like barbarians and assimilating him to the eighteenth-century conception of Ossianic "poetic rage." For the Greek poet in the very torrent, tempest, and whirlwind of passion preserves the temperance, the *σωφροσύνη*, the lucidity, the measure, and the sweet reasonableness of the classic ideal. He does not seek to gild refined gold or

paint the lily, or pluck the wings from painted butterflies to fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes; he does not conjure the wandering stars and pile up hyperbole to make Ossa like a wart; he does not, except in Aristophanes, whom the romanticist Heine therefore admires above all the Greek poets, he does not try to "come up through the lair of the lion with love in his luminous eyes," or "ride with the reckless seraphim on the rim of a red-maned star." "Homer and Pindar," says Landor, "Homer and Pindar soar, but keep their feet on the ground" — a difficult feat for a literal imagination to conceive, but Landor's meaning is clear.

The Greek scholiasts discovered all the arts and sciences in Homer, though Swift protested that he had searched the *Iliad* in vain for an adequate account of the spleen. We at least may find there all the essential qualities of classic art, and something more than the embryonic prefigurement of the later forms of Greek literature. Plato and Aristotle were more nearly right in calling Homer the originator of the drama than are the modern scholiasts who learnedly deduce it from the dithyramb or the funeral chant. You have only, as Plato says, to omit the descriptions between the speeches, and the drama is in substance constituted. The interfused passion and dialectic of the *Oration on the Crown* is already present in Achilles's reply to Agamemnon's embassy, which Gladstone pronounced the finest speech in the world. And a slight measure of the ingenuity with which the philological world of to-day is oversupplied would deduce from Homer lyric, elegy, gnomic verse, and choral hymn, and find in him perhaps even the suggestions of epigram, satire, and comedy. There is no lovelier small, sweet idyl in Theocritus or Tennyson than the vision that illumines the horror of the battlefield for Hector's perturbed spirit as he awaits the onset of Achilles's spear:—

> No time is here for dalliance and soft speech,
> Soft words of dalliance as when youth and maid
> Linger in sweet discourse by rock or tree.

These lines were greatly admired by the ancients, though scholiasts anticipated the Germans, who athetize them on the ground that "the moment is not suitable for such artificial flowers of speech." Such critics should study, in Tolstoi's *War and Peace,* the psychology of the battle soliloquy which, it appears, was not unknown to Homer. Mr. Walter Leaf argues that the mention of rock and tree must be an allusion to a primitive fable in which a rock and a tree hold debate. For, says he, to suppose the rock and tree a background to the scene of love-making is not "epic or even Greek." However it may be with the scholar in politics, the "merely philological" interpretation of literature is a spectacle to rejoice the comic spirit. Even Coleridge chose to ignore the fact that the parting of Hector and Andromache is an idyl and a genre picture, and doubts the Homeric genuineness of Andromache "smiling through her tears" — δακρυόεν γελάσασα. It seems to him more like the prettiness of Bion and Moschus. So Macaulay's New Zealander will doubt the Shakespearian genuineness of the same universal human touch in the tragedy of *King Lear,* and prove it to be an interpolation from Tennyson's idyll of *Merlin and Vivien,* where it is also found. Let us once for all free our minds of this false science by affirming that it is actually more scientific to believe naïvely with the ancients and Mr. Andrew Lang that the universal genius of Homer knew all heights and depths of the human spirit, than it is to constitute an *a priori* type of the stern, simple, primitive bard by the arbitrary excision of everything that does not conform to it. We do not in the least know that Homer was a barbarian, a savage, a primitive folk-bard. We only know that he was a supremely great Greek poet; and, to return to the main thread of our discourse, a poet in whom the fiery passion of the world's poetic youth is already tempered and chastened by the serenity, the reasonableness, and the restraint of Greek art. In another sense than that

in which Cowley applied the words to Vergil, he "made that art which was a rage."

The *Iliad* is "the most important poetical monument existing." But Homer is not the special theme of this introductory lecture, and we can only glance at some of the ways in which the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* might illustrate the lucid rationality of the Greek mind. There is first the architectonic structure of the poems. It is easy for critics who themselves never constructed anything to pick flaws in any plot. But the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* remain the best-constructed long poems in the world — not only in comparison with the formless agglomerations of the Sanskrit epic, the loose-strung songs of the *Edda*, the patchwork of the *Kalewala*, but in comparison with the *Aeneid* or *Paradise Lost*, and still more, of course, in comparison with such formless and aimless productions as Shelley's *Revolt of Islam*. This architectonic imagination, as of a Platonic *demiourgos*, stamping form and informing ideas on the rude indigest of chaos, reveals itself throughout Greek literature: in the nicely distributed symmetry of Herodotus's full but never crowded narrative, in the incredible genius that swings each of the great poetic strophe-blocks of the *Fourth Pythian Ode* to more than Amphionic music into its appointed place in a structure that outlasts the Parthenon; in the still more complicated, but also still more strictly predetermined, labyrinthine construction of those Platonic dialogues, where only the naïve fancy that they are moving "whithersoever the wind may chance to blow"; and in the cunningly-calculated, apparent carelessness with which Demosthenes marshals his weakest arguments in the position least exposed to attack.

Secondly, the Greek gifts of lucidity and analysis manifest themselves in the clear discrimination and distinct portrayal of character within the well-ordered framework of the narrative or plot. A German scholar has written a book on the literary portrait in Greek literature, studying chiefly the his-

tories, the Platonic dialogues, the orators, Characters of Theophrastus, and the New Comedy. The Greeks, of course, never attempted or achieved the extreme refinement of modern psychological analysis. They rarely if ever trace the gradual growth or deterioration of character in the manner of George Eliot, or, like Tolstoi, Howells, and James, turn the searchlight of explicit soliloquy on the revealing *parole intérieure* of half-conscious reflection, the ripples and undercurrents of the stream of thought. They depicted character through action, dramatic conflict, and the rhetoric of appeal or self-justification, with more broad distinctness of type and perhaps with not less truth of perspective and proportion than our too curious scrutiny sometimes yields. Homer's presentation of the characters of Ulysses, Hector, Achilles, Agamemnon, Ajax, Telemachus, Nestor, Helen, Andromache, Penelope, and how many others is the greatest single creation of peers ever accomplished in the exercise of the poet's kingly prerogative. Fully to appreciate this, we should need not only to study each type in its lucid Homeric outline, but to trace its after-evolution from Homer to Sophocles, from Sophocles to Vergil, from Vergil to Racine, from Racine to Tennyson. Homer, as we said, does not refine so far as the moderns do. But his characterizations are far more subtly individualized than is generally believed. The speeches of Achilles, for example, throughout the *Iliad* are marked by a distinctive psychology, rhetoric, nay syntax, of their own. The consistency not only of Hector's type, but of his temperament, is preserved throughout. Coleridge would not have found it easy to redeem his engagement "to compile twelve books with characters just as distinct and consistent as those in the *Iliad* from the metrical ballads and other chronicles of England."

This intellectualism which, from the beginning, controlled the sensibility and informed the imagination of the Greek, we might, if time allowed, further illustrate by the clearly

defined, human beauty of the gods of the Homeric pantheon, contrasted with the cloudy symbolisms and theriomorphic divinities of other mythologies, "pawing to get free their hinder parts," or again by the Homeric style, with its clean-cut, plastically defined similes, and its swift, lucid evolution of the thought, which Arnold compares with Voltaire. And then it would be the task of a fuller exposition to trace the history of these qualities to their perfect balance with plastic beauty in the pure classicism of Sophocles and Phidias, and their excess in the literature of the decline.

"It appears that contention is not of one kind, but two — one, the good emulation, a thing to be praised; the other, the evil strife of envy, a thing of reproach"; so begins Hesiod's *Works and Days*. Is this the primitive folk-poet, or the Platonic Socrates, pointing out in his favorite phrase that if equivocation is not to undo us we must distinguish δύο εἴδη, two species? Montaigne said, "*distinguo* is the first word in my philosophy." It was the first and the last word in the philosophy of the Greeks. Distinction, antithesis, mediation and fluent coördination, we could follow them all together with the development of abstraction, in poetry, architecture, philosophy, oratory, and rhetoric, till rhetoric and dialectic swallowed all. Jowett's essay on the *Decline of Greek Literature*, in the introduction to his translation of Plato's *Phaedrus*, contains some interesting observations on the great "literary waste, or dead level, or interminable marsh in which Greek literature was soon destined to disappear." Plato, whom Joseph de Maistre detests as the chief representative of this tendency, Jowett thinks foresaw it and protested against its authors, the Sophists. The history of its natural and perhaps inevitable development from the defects, or rather the excesses of the qualities, of the Greek mind remains to be written.

In this long evolution, Sophocles represents the central culminating moment of the perfect equilibrium of imagina-

tion and art, plasticity and thought; and his tragedies are the touchstone of our appreciation of the distinctive classic beauty which the eighteenth century confused with the pseudo-classic, and for which we substitute the romantic. The mechanical procedure of pseudo-classicism is aptly characterized in Campbell's description of the method of the Greek artist: —

> When first the Rhodian's mimic art array'd
> The queen of Beauty in her Cyprian Shade,
> The happy master mingled on his piece
> Each look that charm'd him in the fair of Greece.

The romantic beauty is that which thrills the modern reader in Professor Murray's transfiguring translations of Euripides, which seem to have been composed in confirmation of Matthew Arnold's complaint that "the moderns will only have the antique on the condition of making it more beautiful (according to their own notions of beauty) than the antique." [1]

But the true Hellenic beauty is that of Sophocles, in whom the artistic presentment of the essential spiritual quality of human action and passion is blurred by no touch of capricious fantasy, sensational excess, inorganic ornament, or distracting and disillusionizing detail. Sophoclean tragedy is for the drama what the Parthenon is for architecture and sculpture, the exemplification of the definition already glanced at that beauty is the idea shining through the individual.

This ideal equilibrium is by the very law of human nature unstable, and the change, not to use the question-begging term "decadence," began with Euripides. The harmony of

[1] As the conclusion of this paper will show (*infra*, p. 23), I am grateful to the poetic interpreter who can heighten our enjoyment of the classics by romantic coloring and perhaps fantastic associations and contrasts of modern feeling. My reserves begin only when Professor Murray, speaking as a critic and a scholar, argues from his own translation of, let us say, *Bacchae*, 876–881, 997–1011, or Polybius, IV, 31, or the Leipsydrion Skolion.

form and content, another definition of the classic ideal, is broken, never to be restored. Henceforth the idea transcends the form in dialectic and symbolism, or the empty form is elaborated in euphuism and rhetoric. Euripides and Plato, the two chief representatives of Hellenism for the sequent centuries, are also in a sense its destroyers. The Greeks' native facility in abstraction, ratiocination, dialectic, and the rhetorical expansion of the idea has definitively triumphed over the imaginative and plastic genius that achieved its perfect artistic embodiment. Euripides, charming poet and fascinating dramatist though he be, belongs distinctly with Schiller, the older Goethe, and George Eliot, and Mr. Bernard Shaw, to the inferior type of artists whose work exudes and obtrudes the ideas which it is unable to assimilate.

Plato is himself a supreme artist in whom all contradictions and seeming impossibilities are reconciled. But his writings are the source both in Greek and in European literature of two tendencies incompatible with the practice and the appreciation of the purest Hellenic art — the tradition of dialectical scholasticism, and the tradition of mystic symbolism.

The study of this evolution I must reserve for another occasion. The present hurried survey must turn from the generalized ideal Homeric or Sophoclean qualities of Greek literature to the consideration of certain characteristics which reveal themselves in the course of its historic life, and which after its sheer artistic beauty contribute chiefly to the abiding interest and significance that distinguish it from all other literatures. There is first the interest which attaches to the orderly sequence and full development of the possibilities of each distinct literary form or kind before we pass to the next. No secondary, imitative, and therefore partially artificial, literature can exhibit this natural and artistic growth. There is a certain painful dissonance between the rude primitive style and culture of the early Romans and the

sophisticated content of the Euripidean drama, Menandrian comedy, Euhemeristic philosophy, and Sicilian cookbooks which they translated and adapted side by side with Livius Andronicus's Saturnian version of the *Odyssey*. A sense of amateurish confusion results from the endeavors of the Italian Renaissance, the French Plĕïade, and the Elizabethans to create out of hand on classical models a complete literary assortment of dramas, epics, lyrics, Pindaric and Horatian odes, and Juvenalian satires. But the Greeks invented or evolved each literary form to meet a real need, and the orderly development of Greek literature through epic, lyric, drama, history, oratory, and philosophy, in contrast to the artificiality, and at the same time the amateurishness, of other literatures, is at once natural, artistic, and professional. Natural and artistic in the nice adaptation of each form to the life out of which it grew and the sentiments which it expresses; artistic and professional in that each form was elaborated to the exhaustion of its possibilities by a succession of competing artists, early apprenticed and trained in guilds and schools first to assimilate and then to surpass the work of their predecessors. In this respect, Greek literature is the counterpart of Greek sculpture and Italian painting, and illustrates the truth on which Plato bases education in his ideal state that those who are to achieve greatness in any art must generally be παιδομαθεῖς, bred up to it in both play and work from childhood.

Again, Greek literature is beyond all other literatures the spontaneous outgrowth of the national life, and throughout the classical period it remained in touch with life. The science of literature will demonstrate this by proving the nice and necessary adaptation of the ballad and epic to the Homeric camp-fire or Mycenaean palace, of the personal lyric to the expression of the passionate individualism of the age of colonial adventure and political unsettlement, of the choral hymn to embody the conservative ideals of the athletic

aristocracy of Boeotia and the Peloponnesus, of the drama to be the teacher and entertainer of triumphant democracy in the city state. But apart from these ambitious generalizations, the very schoolboy who passes from his Caesar and Cicero to Xenophon and Homer is at once aware that he has emerged from the *oratio obliqua* and the oratorical period of self-complacent statesmanship, with its thumb in its double-breasted toga, into the presence of real people who do not talk like a book. The only man who habitually talks like a book in classical Greek literature is the orator Isocrates, who is not an orator, but a schoolmaster and an essayist. I do not count Thucydides, because his style, tortuous as it appears to us, seems to have come as naturally to him as the style of Mr. and Mrs. Browning's love letters did to them.

Colloquial Latin has to be studied as a thing apart, a sort of low life below stairs, banished from the dignified drawing-rooms of literature. But colloquialism and idiom are so interwoven with the artistic fabric of Greek style that many scholars are just beginning to suspect their existence. When the skeptical Iphigeneia, in a passage marked by colloquial idiom throughout, says, "Don't tell me that you're Orestes. Argos and Nauplia are full of him," the German commentators throw up their hands, and Professor Murray sentimentally translates: —

> Argos is *bright* with him and Nauplia's shore.

But Iphigeneia's meaning is perfectly plain to a reader of Bret Harte who remembers how the Arizona bad man replies to the Boston tenderfoot who announces that he is a prospector, — "Hell is *full* of such prospectors."

The Latin authors minded their grammatical *p*'s and *q*'s, and rarely committed anacoluthon. But, always excepting Isocrates, the best Greek writers, provided the meaning was clear and the emphasis just, cared as little for the sequence of tenses, the common concords, and the painfully explicit

distributive reference of every pronoun to its proper antecedent as a vivacious woman does to-day. They all exhibit what Wilamowitz calls the healthy nonchalance of Herodotus's Ionian style.

The predominance of the living or spoken over the dead or written word is another expression of the same quality. Classical Greek is easier to follow when read aloud than either German or Latin. It conforms to the psychology and follows the rhythms of natural association and emphasis rather than the prescriptions of artificial logic and syntax. Pre-dramatic poetry, if not always sung, was usually recited. Even at Athens Homer was better known by the recitals of the rhapsodes than by the eye. Greek plays were published on the Dionysian stage in editions of twenty thousand. Oratory in its very nature was composed to be heard. Even history was recited in agonistic competitions. Even philosophy in Plato assumes the form of living and incomparably true and natural conversation which makes the dialogues for those who know how to use them a discipline of the dialectical faculties which, as Coleridge and Mill remind us, no progress of science can replace. Even the essayist Isocrates expects his essays to be read aloud. Our exclusive reliance on the eye and habitual neglect of the voice and ear in the study of Greek literature is the most fatal of errors.

And being thus always in touch with life, Greek literature is in the better sense of the word realistic. It does not push realism to excess by reaction against the thin abstractness of pseudo-classicism; it does not observe Nature with a notebook, and count the streaks in the tulip, or endeavor to deduce moral thunder from daisies and buttercups and celandines; it does not describe fleeting moods and analyze unconscious motives with falsifying emphasis. But it composes with the eye on the object and unhampered by any pseudo-classic canons of artificial taste or restrictions of

vocabulary. It calls a spade a spade, compares Ulysses tossing through a restless night to a haggis on the fire, and Ajax to an ass, not with Pope to "the slow beast with heavy strength endued." It is not afraid to show the infant Achilles slobbering on the lap of Phoenix, to repeat the babble of Orestes's nurse, or echo the shrieks of Philoctetes. "I shall never cease crying to our French authors," exclaims Diderot, "truth, nature, the ancients, Sophocles, Philoctetes. The poet exhibited him on the stage crouching at the entrance of his cave and covered with filthy rags." The antithesis of classical and realistic is as false, then, as the opposition of classic and romantic. In both cases, the other extreme is the thin artificiality and false dignity of the secondary and pseudo-classic, while the genuine Greek classic in the terminology of Aristotle's Ethics holds the virtuous mean.

The theme of Greek poetry is in Plato's and Aristotle's definition the imitation of human action, and only so much stage setting of description of nature and motivation of psychological introspection as conduce to truth and right perspective in that. It conveys less minute truth of a certain order than some kinds of modern descriptive and meditative verse. But it also has infinitely less error and extravagance. If there are no Greek poems to match Keats's *Ode to the Nightingale* or Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind*, there is also nothing like Browning's *Childe Roland*, Rossetti's *Blessed Damozel*, or Poe's *Al Aaraaf*, and long communion with Sophocles and Aeschylus and Pindar impairs the capacity to appreciate them in the modern student.

In short, Greek poetry springs out of life, remains always in touch with life, sees life steadily and sees it whole, and therefore presents to the imaginative reason the broadest, sanest, truest poetic criticism of life. One cause of this is that the Greek race, like a happy man, came to each experience of life in its season and tasted its full flavor before passing on to the next.

That old Greek life has passed away. It is the business of the professional archaeologist and historian to revive its express image in the minutest ascertainable details. But for education and humane culture a realistic generation may overemphasize this aspect of Greek studies. The technical detail of Greek antiquities is not in itself so much more valuable than that of Egypt, Assyria, China, Japan, or the Middle Age that we should burden our memories with its unretainable minutiae. As Emerson says, "time dissipates to shining ether the solid angularity of facts" — a dangerous text for the American collegian. But my meaning is, not that we should dispense with facts, but that education and culture must select the facts that concern us as men, not as specialists, and not waste upon the history and structure of the Dionysiac theatre, the topography of the Forum, or the fashion of draping the toga, the scant time and attention that is all too little for the appreciation of the drama of Sophocles and the oratory of Cicero. The Greeks above all other peoples extracted from every human and natural experience its abiding spiritual significance. It is this that largely constitutes the enduring value of their history and literature, and it is on this that if we are wise we shall concentrate attention. A dozen literatures supply materials for the theory of the epic, or studies in tribal morality and folk-lore. The *Chanson de Roland* and the *Nibelungenlied* are almost as good cadavers for dissection in the seminar-room as the *Iliad*. But the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are the only adequate mirrors of the heroic and adventurous poetic adolescence of humanity. The theory and conjectural origins of the lyric can be expounded in connection with the lyric of Provence, Italy, Iceland, or the ballads of early England. But unless the actual cadences of Sappho, Alcaeus, and Pindar are echoing in our memories, we shall have missed the knowledge of the highest reaches of song and go through life with ears attuned to the second-best.

Realism brings out the analogies between Greek athletics and our own, and antiquarianism writes treatises on the order of events in the pentathlon. But the net outcome of his athletics was for the Greek, and ought to be for us, the Apoxyomenus and the Diadumenus, the *sophrosyne* of the Platonic Charmides, the gracious form of Lysis in the palaestra standing with the other boys and youths, wearing a crown upon his head like a fair vision, and outsoaring and outlasting all the epinician odes of that

> Son of the lightning, fair and fiery star,
> Strong-winged imperial Pindar, voice divine.

If we miss that, and how many professional classical scholars do, what profit is there in the technical history of Greek athletics?

Many peoples and countless individuals have known the indescribable thrill that comes with the first awakening of the expanding intelligence to the enlarging conceptions of new-born science and philosophy. But the pure quintessence of that spiritual intoxication, caught by Lucretius, Bruno, Emerson, Huxley, Tyndall, and how many others, is to be tasted only in the pre-Socratic philosophic poets of Greece. "It is as impossible to apprehend the true origins of science without having studied these primitive savants, as to acquire the sense of the highest poetry without knowing Homer," says Renan.

Other peoples have had a popular drama, partly original, and a secondary artistic drama derived from the Greeks. The Greek drama was both popular and artistic, and the source of all the rest. Other nations have had their Froissarts and their Sir John Mandevilles, but Herodotus remains the unapproachable type of the historian *conteur* and naïvely entertaining traveler. Other peoples have analyzed their own social and civic life and illustrated the drama of contemporary history by a perpetual accompaniment of discussion

and moral and political comment, but none so exhaustively and intelligently as the Greeks. Thucydides is still the supreme exemplar of the hard-headed political positivist, the prototype of Machiavelli and Guicciardini, of Hobbes and La Rochefoucauld. There is no other historic narrative at once so vivid and minute and so completely intellectualized, so interpenetrated and fused with ethical and political reflection, as his story of the Peloponnesian War. Artistically the despair of Gray and Macaulay, its deeper and philosophic significance for the development of modern political thought is not yet estimated nor even appreciated.

The interminable discussions of clever, disputatious young men in the endeavor to settle the problem of the universe or adjust themselves to it, are a familiar theme of half-wistful satire in Thackeray. More philosophical observers, from Bacon to Mill, have recognized their enormous potency in shaping the opinions and ideals of the men whose thoughts were to determine the thoughts of the next generation. But the only adequate expression in literature of this great human experience is the dialogues of Plato. They are the dramatic idealization of this side of the spiritual life of that Athens of Socrates and Pericles in whose large leisure men talked with men seriously, passionately on other topics than business or politics, and their discussions created the logic, the rhetoric, the psychology, the metaphysics, and the ethical and political philosophy of western Europe, and wrought out the distinctions, the definitions, the categories that have shaped and molded all subsequent speculation.

There have been other lost causes that did not please the gods, though they pleased Cato; but none that have left such a splendid record of passionate yet thoughtful oratory as the duel of Demosthenes and King Philip. And the *Oration on the Crown* remains for all time the crowning expression of the consolatory truth that there are some things better than success, some defeats that are preferable to victory.

Other civilizations and other ideals of life have had their polymaths and systematizing philosophers to sum them up, their Leibnitzes, their Kants, their Herbert Spencers. But they all shrivel into insignificance compared with Aristotle's encyclopaedic analysis of the experience of his race, the neglect of which by the American universities of to-day is on the broader view of history a far stranger phenomenon than its slavish acceptance by the universities of mediaeval Europe.

In this rapid survey of the essential and abiding values of Greek literature, I have already trenched upon my final topic, the attitude of mind in which we should approach the study of that literature and the methods of interpretation and appreciation which we should prefer among the many which the specialties or the literary fashions of the age present to our choice. I should like to define and illustrate by horrible examples the method of undiscriminating erudition; the philological Sherlock Holmes method of completing the record by sweat-boxing the evidence; the method of evolution and the pure *a priori* science of literature; the folk-lore method that makes Homer a lively barbarian, interprets Plato by the Orphic tablets of southern Italy, and finds something of the "medicine man" in Sophocles's *King Oedipus;* and, chief of all, the latest English blend of sentimental mediaevalism with romantic anthropology. But time fails, and this, too, must be reserved for another occasion. It is better so, for the tone that I should be forced to adopt might be thought unbecoming in a professional student, and could easily be mistaken for the wooing of a cheap applause by facile appeals to the penchant that a general audience has to ridicule all minute scholarship as pedantry. My objection is not to the minuteness, or even to the pedantry, of modern research, but to its systematic and falsifying ingenuity, and its endeavor to apply the rigid methods of science in alien matter. It is

often urged that the scholar with a system and a bias and a point to prove is harmless, helpful even by the stimulus he imparts and the interest he awakens. But it is not so. He diffuses a fog of hypothesis between the reader and the plain facts of the tradition, which are interesting enough without adventitious stimulus, if we only can see them simply and sanely in the white light of objectivity and the dry light of the intellect. The first advice to give to the general reader and the young scholar is to find out, if he can, the safe and sane men, of whom Jebb is the consummate type, and confine his reading, or at least pin his faith, to them. The ingenious systematizers and brilliant constructors of hypotheses cannot be trusted to quote with relevancy or translate with accuracy. Physical science eliminates this wild work by the tests of the laboratory. But in the domain of literary and philological investigation few of us realize the amount of misstatement and unprovable assertion that circulates in reputable and pretentious books.

After this diatribe, you will ask me what is my shibboleth, my system? the point that I would prove? my method for the study of Greek literature? If I must assume a label, it is the unity of literature, the unity of the human spirit — of the European spirit at least, from Homer to Tennyson, and the interpretation of literature by Emerson's principle that all the best books seem to have been written by one man. That principle is subject to many qualifications, of which more soon. But it will prove a safer guide than the systematic exaggeration of differences and the over-curious observation concerned with irrelevant details of local and historical color. It will at least save us from the folly of condescending allowance for the immaturity of the great minds of antiquity; the absurdity of confounding the survivals of mythology, or the symbolism of poetic personification in Sophocles and Aeschylus with their religion of the imaginative reason; and the senti-

mentality that alternately strives to bring the classics nearer to us by mediaevalizing diction and strained fantastic interpretations, or despairingly proclaims that they must always remain sealed books to the Christian, the modern, the romantic mind.

This is the burden of an eloquent paper by Professor Bury — the *anima naturaliter pagana* — which we can never recover; and the absence of which vitiates, he thinks, the neo-classic revivals not only of Keats and Shelley, but even of Tennyson, Arnold, and Swinburne. Professor Bury's warning against the intrusion of modern sentiment into our scholarship and criticism was timely in 1891, and, as I have already hinted, is still more so now. But I fail to see that the impossibility of recapturing the *anima naturaliter pagana* is any ground for despairing of our intelligent understanding of Greek literature or rejecting the legitimate pleasure which we derive from the exquisite neo-classic poetry of England and the beautiful translations of Professor Murray. Why should we wish to recover the Greek pagan soul, or need to in order to appreciate Greek poetry and art? Professor Bury proves that we cannot hope to feel precisely as the ancient Greeks did. True. A middle-aged man can rarely feel as a youth of twenty. But he can understand and sympathize and enjoy. The differences between the ancient and modern mind are very real. But they arise naturally out of conditions which we can comprehend, and no more than the equally real differences in the psychology of men and women do they preclude the larger inclusive intelligence that heightens the spiritual values of companionship by the piquant sense of contrast and identity in diversity. This at least is the mood in which I prefer to approach Greek and modern poetry, and in justification of it I will conclude these imperfect hints and suggestions by dwelling for a few minutes on some of the perhaps partly fanciful imaginative and emo-

tional contrasts which, to my apprehension, seem to heighten our enjoyment and deepen our appreciation of both.

The modern spirit is an organ of many stops, an Aeolian lyre, subject to every skyey influence and tremulously responsive to gusts of feeling and winds of doctrine that blow from very far. History and discovery, science and psychology, have enlarged the world of nature and man beyond our power to realize it in a single brain. The Greek *polis* was a sunny clearing, sharply defined against the dark shades of the impenetrable forest of uninvestigated nature and unexplored barbaric civilization and history that girded it. Our explorers have penetrated that *selva selvaggia* in many directions and have brought back tidings of many a magic fountain and many an enchanted castle hidden in its gloomy depths. But they have found no issue to any Elysian Field or Island of the Blest, no thoroughfare leading to any rock-based City of God, and their travelers' tales have destroyed our contentment with our bounded horizon and our childhood's sense of the completeness and stability of our transitory habitation. The men who compose a gathering of modern savants have in common only the universal feelings of mankind, the indispensable elements of education, a thin varnish of culture, and a few philosophic generalizations. A large part of every brain is filled by an unnatural parasitic growth of specialized knowledge, cuneiform inscriptions, old French epics, constitutional history of the German Empire, the chemistry of the carbon compounds, the embryology of the earthworm. A body of cultivated Greeks knew and did nearly the same things. They knew one language, whose adequacy for all the needs of expression they never doubted, one literature, one type of civilization, one religion, one art, one history. They were hemmed in, it is true, by the ancient civilizations of the East, and could see face to face what we must restore by painful reconstruction. But it never really informed their thoughts or touched their feelings. The Greek as we see

him in Herodotus gazes at the marvels of Egypt and the East with the naïve, open-eyed wonder of Miranda, "Oh, brave new world, that has such people in it." But he never disturbed his childlike calm by any effort to enter into the souls that dwelt in those strange shapes. His youthful exuberance may have been momentarily dashed when the Egyptian priest told him that the Greeks were always children and possessed no traditions hoary with eld, or when his boast that his sixteenth ancestor was a god was met by an array of two hundred and forty statues of successive high priests that had lived since the days when the gods walked on earth. But he felt no such awe as that which prompted Rossetti's cry when the winged bull of Nineveh was hoisted into the British Museum : —

> Ah ! in what quarries lay the stone
> From which this pygmy pile has grown,
> Unto man's need how long unknown,
> Since thy vast temples, court and cone,
> Rose far in desert history.

No such yearning sympathy with alien forms of spiritual life as breathes through the question, "Dreamed they of this, thy worshippers?"

And what we attempt for the Oriental civilization, which the Greek was content to accept as part of the picturesque external setting of his life, we try to do for every period of history. We seek to reanimate, to enter dramatically into the souls of them all, the Greek himself, the Roman, his Teutonic conqueror, the mediaeval man, the man of the Renaissance, the German, the French, the Russian. Here is one chief cause of the complication and range of our poetry. Contrast the compact unity of the Greek drama, confined to the legendary heroes of Greece, and gradually narrowing itself to the fortunes of a few great families : —

> Thebes or Pelops' line,
> Or the tale of Troy divine,

with the infinite diversity of theme of the Elizabethan drama: Greek legends, Roman history, medieval *gesta*, tales of Turkish harems or Italian palaces. The Greek never attempted to think or feel otherwise than as a Greek. The modern poet is constantly essaying to enlarge his experience by nestling in the brain and thinking the thoughts of alien men and looking out upon the world from the windows of strange souls. Such poems as Tennyson's *St. Simon Stylites*, Rossetti's *Dante at Verona*, Browning's *The Bishop Orders His Tomb*, or *Mr. Sludge the Medium* have no analogues in Greek literature.

Modern poetry is further sophisticated and refined by literary reminiscence. The Greeks did not employ literary reminiscence even in their own tongue quite in the modern way. Homer, of course, was the common storehouse of imagery and phrase, and each literary kind, as lyric, epic, or drama, had its traditional formulas. The gnomic poets learned at school were constantly quoted and paraphrased; and the parodies of Aristophanes assume intimate familiarity with a considerable body of lyric and dramatic poetry. But it took the form of direct simple quotation or parody rather than of remote allusiveness. And in any case the allusions were confined to one limited, compact body of literature. But the modern English poet assumes an equal familiarity with four literary traditions, the Greek, the Latin, the Hebrew, and the English, and does not hesitate to glance at any other that may be present to his memory. The alternate mosaics from classical and biblical themes in Dante's purgatorial staircase symbolize this double spiritual world in which we must strive to be at home, that which has its source in Homer, and that which starts from the Old Testament — "From Pyrrha's pebbles or old Adam's seed." It lends a wondrous variety of resource to our poetry. A Greek poet could compare the beauty of his heroine to Aphrodite rising from the sea, as Tennyson does at the

close of *The Princess;* but Tennyson can also transport us to another world of feeling and imagination, by telling us that she is "fairer than Rachel by the palmy well, fairer than Ruth amid the fields of corn," and flashes us into yet another by saying that she is more lovely than the maid whom "Gwythion made by glamour out of flowers." But we can never quite subdue this jarring material to the emotional and artistic unity achieved by the Greeks. There will always be a slight sense of discord in Milton's *Lycidas*, who, though "mounted high, thro' the dear might of Him that walked the waves," remains yet "the genius of the shore to all that wander in that perilous flood"; or in Dante's "Supreme Jove that wast for us nailed to the cross"; and we smile when Fletcher, singing the power of love in the manner of the Greeks, tells us that "fair Callisto was a nun." And yet again what a range, what a suggestiveness, it lends to our poetry. *Balder Dead* is a Scandinavian tale, told in Homeric formulas. In *Sohrab and Rustum*, Homeric imagery is transposed to an Oriental key. William Morris adds a strange piquancy to Greek legends by decking them out in fantastic medieval attire. The draught of vintage for which Keats yearned tastes at once of Flora and Provençal song and dance. In Tennyson's *Ulysses*, we enjoy the distilled quintessence of Homer, Dante, and the spirit of modern science. *Godiva* is an old English legend, prefaced by a bit of Theocritus, and adorned alternately with biblical and Homeric imagery. The whole world of Greek mythology lay open to the authors of *Laodamia* and *Oenone*, but to what worlds of thought and feeling inaccessible to the Greek are we transported by such lines as —

> The holy time is quiet as a nun
> Breathless with adoration.
>
> But o'er her meek eyes came a happy mist
> Like that which kept the heart of Eden green
> Before the useful trouble of the rain;

His countenance like richest alchemy;
Or like an old world mammoth bulked in ice;
Where the kneeling hamlet drains
The chalice of the grapes of God;
The world is too much with us;
Shadowing the snow-limbed Eve, from whom she came.

And just because through history and literature he realizes the past so much more intensely, just because he is ever listening to the lordly music, flowing from the illimitable years, the modern poet straining for a glimpse of the vision of the world and all the wonder that shall be, sees or divines more of the future than the Greek. He dwells in spirit under the cope of the half-attained futurity, he strives to identify himself with the prophetic soul of the wide world, dreaming on things to come. He sings hymns unbidden till the world is wrought to sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not. He dreams of what the world will be when the years have passed away. This note is wanting in Greek poetry. The Greek poet rarely fancied that the thoughts of men were widened by the process of the suns. The anticipations of Keats's *Hyperion* in Aeschylus are very faint, and Professor Murray's argument, that because the Greeks in fact progressed, they had our idea of Progress, is an obvious equivocation.[1] The Greeks either conceived history as a gradual degeneration from a not very remote golden age of pastoral simplicity, or more philosophically as a series of recurrent cycles of civilization and decay. The idea of progressive development was first suggested to thoughtful Greeks by the empire of Rome. The humanitarian visions of Shelley, Wordsworth, and Byron, the anticipations of *Locksley Hall*, had no place in the minds of the Greeks. They felt no passion to reform the world, be-

[1] *Rise of the Greek Epic*, Chapter I.

cause they could not conceive of a world fundamentally different from the one they knew.[1] No Greek poet ever felt himself as a nerve over which wandered the else unfelt oppressions of the world. No Greek poet brooded over the fierce confederate storm of sorrow, barricadoed within the walls of great cities. The life of a Greek gentleman was pleasant enough, barring the inevitable limitations of life; that the lives of slaves and barbarians should be less delightful was a matter of course.

In many other ways, too, our world is larger and at the same time more minutely apprehended in its details than the Greek. For the tiny basin of the Mediterranean we have substituted the whole terraqueous globe. We survey mankind from China to Peru, we hear the long wash of Australasian seas, and breathe in converse seasons,

> Past the wall unsurmounted that bars out our vision with iron and fire
> We have sent forth our soul for the stars to comply with and suns to conspire.

From this unsatisfying sense of vastness and complexity springs much of the distinctive melancholy of modern poetry. It is an error to suppose that the Greeks were always blithe and happy and free from this taint of melancholy. From Homer to the latest epigram of the Anthology, there runs through Greek literature a continuous wail for the impotence of man, the brief bloom of youth and beauty, the arbitrary sway of fortune, the delusiveness of hope, the inevitableness of age and death. But this natural melancholy, though freely expressed when the mood came, was not an habitual attitude of mind, and passing attacks of it were soon "boxed out of the Greek lad and spun out of the Greek girl," as Ruskin tells us. The modern melan-

[1] Plato is an exception to every limiting generalization.

choly is a different thing. It is a sense of bewilderment and bafflement at the complexity of the world; a nameless chill of horror and helplessness in the face of its pitiless, unfeeling immensity — the feeling expressed with appalling vividness and intensity in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Pulvis et umbra*. To the fancy of the ancient poet, the stars were a chorus of nymphs dancing about the altar of the moon; resplendent powers conspicuous in the ether, bringing note of summer and winter to man; the sparkling gems of the plumage of Juno's peacock transferred to decorate the sky; bright eyes of love shining down upon the earth. To the modern, if he lets his fancy wander from the literal truth of science so far as to call them eyes, they are "innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes; cold fires, yet with power to burn and brand his nothingness into man"; and if imagination peoples them, it is not with Plato's purified spirits awaiting the new birth, but with souls as troubled and oppressed as our own.

> Hesper, Venus, were we native to that splendor, or in Mars,
> We should see the Globe we groan in, fairest of their evening stars;
> Could we dream of wars and carnage, craft and madness, lust and spite,
> Roaring London, raving Paris, in that point of peaceful light?

This is one source of our modern melancholy. Another is allied to the feeling of a harassed, overworked student, who has undertaken too many courses of study. We start out with the proud boast of Emerson, "what Plato has thought we may think; what a saint has felt we may feel; what at any time has befallen any man we can understand." We get us the gains of various men; we give ourselves up so many times to Homer and Paganism, to Aphrodite and Apollo, to Buddha, to Christ; we ransack the ages, spoil the climes; we gather into our palace of art all forms and pressures past of painting and sculpture; the gracious shapes

of every mythology, the aspirations of all religions, the formulas of all philosophies; and drink deep of "the unsealed springs where science bedews her daedal wings"; we fancy, like Keats's Apollo, that knowledge enormous will make a god of us: names, deeds, gray legends, dire events, rebellions, majesties, sovereign voices, agonies, creations, and destroyings, all at once, pouring into the wide hollows of our brain. But alas! the hollows of our brains are no wider than those of Sophocles or Plato. In giving to every passion something we have left for no passion truly anything. A man's reach should exceed his grasp, our poet tells us, but it was not in the mouth of a happy man that he put the saying. Our palace of art has too many and too splendid apartments to be a comfortable habitation for the spirit; and we wander restlessly from chamber to chamber like Caligula, or Nero in his Golden House. We stand helpless before our accumulated treasures; they master us, we cannot master them. We cannot apprehend, coördinate, or unify them; they are the possession of humanity, not of individual man. Heirs of all the ages, we lack strength to enter upon our inheritance. "The man in the street, finding no worth in himself which corresponds to the force which built the town or sculptured a marble god, feels poor when he looks on them," says Emerson. And the modern man, contemplating the gathered spoils of the ages, the relics of five civilizations, collected in libraries and museums, murmurs with Keats, gazing helplessly at the Elgin marbles:—

> My spirit is too weak; mortality
> Weighs heavily on me like unwilling sleep,
> And each imagined pinnacle and steep
> Of god-like hardship tells me I must die.

And so we yearn for the simple, sensuous life of the Greek, who knew only a few things, but those perfect — his Homer, his marble gods, his Sophoclean tragedy, and music, and

gymnastic, and the blithe, wholesome life under the clear Attic sky.

It is in this mood that we deplore the victory of the pale Galilean, sentimentalize over Charmides, write passionate hymns to Apollo and Persephone, make it our mission to banish those pale spectres, virginity, mysticism, and melancholy; pray to Our Lady of Pain to come down and relieve us from virtue; cry out to the modern spirit, "why wilt thou cast the roses from thy hair"; and attempt with Heine to patch up the fictitious quarrel which Christianity has cooked up between mind and body. But this is a false and morbid sentiment. We cannot reascend the stream of time, and the effort to renounce Christianity, chivalry, romanticism, and all the works of the modern and mediaeval spirit would make of us at the best hungry Greeklings, not Greeks. "Not to be scorned and rejected of men," says Homer, "are the splendid gifts of the gods, which they bestow according to their own good pleasure, and no man chooses for himself." We cannot renounce our psychological heritage, the more delicate and varied sensibilities with which the centuries have endowed the modern soul. A day with Charmides in the palaestra of Taureas would perhaps prove inexpressibly wearisome to his most enthusiastic modern devotees, even were Socrates present to lead the conversation; and Pindar's athletes are far more precious to us in the Olympian odes and in the marble of Phidias than they would be in the flesh. The flower and quintessence of that younger time abides with us in the winter of the world, preserved in art and literature, like "summer's distillation, a liquid prisoner pent in walls of glass." "I pour thee such wine," the genius of the past cries out to modern man: —

> Leave the flesh to the fate it was fit for! the spirit be thine!
> By the spirit, when age shall o'ercome thee, thou still shalt enjoy
> More indeed, than at first when unconscious, the life of a boy.

We cannot recover the habitual temper of mind that created Greek poetry. But we can make of it an incomparable educational instrument in youth, and in our riper years a possession of beauty that will keep amid the turmoil and distractions of our fevered modern life "a bower quiet for us and a sleep full of sweet dreams and health and quiet breathing."

PAUL SHOREY.

EPIC POETRY

It is the unique distinction of the literature of the Greeks that the best comes first. With other peoples the efflorescence of national genius waits upon slower processes of germination. With the Greeks, at the very dawn of their history, poetry had burst forth into immortal bloom. The evolution in orderly sequence of the later products of Hellenic literature can be fairly well discerned; the antecedents of the epic alone lie far beyond our vision, as they lay far beyond the vision of the Hellenes themselves. The stories of Achilles and Odysseus absorbed or displaced alike the primitive hymns to the gods and the songs in honor of the other heroes of the race. In their past the Greeks discovered no authentic poetry older than *Iliad* or *Odyssey*. All the rest had vanished in the thin air of irreparable loss.

Unlike the moderns, the Greeks were untroubled to discover the sources whose mingled currents made that large stream of Homer whence were drawn all forms of eloquence in Greece itself; even as Homer himself says that all rivers and fountains spring originally from Father Ocean. Thrice and four times happy were the Greeks in their almost total lack of prescience of the dread "Homeric Question," whose persistent intrusion into literary criticism since Wolf's *Prolegomena* might well seem to indicate to the world at large that those who deal with Greek at first hand find the permanent value of the Greek epic less in the great love and long study of the art and humanity of its greatest monuments than in chasing the *ignis fatuus* of a typical problem of methodical research. If we are not to rob ourselves of

our serener joy, we must not "ask questions that would cause a man to hang himself," as Dr. Johnson said to the indefatigable Boswell. And such a question is the "Homeric Question."

The literary appreciation of Homer has long had to pay a large part of the cost of acquitting the poet from the charge of writing either or both *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and in either case of possessing genius so audacious as to transcend the critic's measure of human faculty. The just estimation of the two national epics of Greece is impaired if we care first for the parts and last for the whole, and are not content to remain, in guarded moments, incurious whether the *Iliad* is a consolidation of a "Wrath of Achilles" and a "Fall of Ilium" and whether the *Odyssey* contains a conflation of two "Returns" of the hero. The scholar must be the most searching of critics and at the same time preserve undisturbed another self that is able to estimate larger literary values, and especially the unity of moral situation. Did not the mighty Descartes acquiesce in a *via media* and bid his obstinate questionings cease before the source of the moral unity of the world? We must learn to confess, at least in moments of aesthetic calm, a certain apathy to the vicissitudes of the struggle between Separatists and Unitarians; we must regain the *naïveté* of the Greeks themselves, and yield an unconditional surrender to the grandeur and charm of the Homeric poems by whomsoever written and at whatever time. The safety of unalloyed delight must not be imperiled by agitation of the overhanging Question.

In certain passes of the Alps, the poet Gray says in his Journal, the traveler is urged by his guides to press on lest the very agitation of the air should loosen the snows above and overwhelm the caravan. "I took their counsel," says the poet, "and hastened on in silence": —

Non ragioniam di lor, ma guarda e passa.

But in tacitly substituting Homer for my proper theme, the Greek epic, it may seem that, like the Earl of Oxford in Pope's time, I have an epical way of beginning in the middle of things. And yet, in the final estimate of the cultural influences of Greek literature upon the modern world, no other poems, much less any other of the many Greek epics, can rival *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in their enduring value.

No other epic poet of Greece might venture to trespass on Homer's themes. The lost epics of the tale of Troy moved round the periphery of the circle at whose centre stood the wrath of Achilles, and the home-coming of Odysseus. The lost epics of the story of Oedipus and Heracles paled before the radiance of *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. It was mere similarity to the external form and style of Homer that gave the name epic to the cosmogonical and didactic poems of Hesiod and to the attempts of the early philosophers to set forth the Nature of Things. The Greek epic owes its indefeasible value neither to Hesiod's mythological panorama of the evolution from chaos of the primal forces of nature and its peerage of the Olympians, nor to his exposition of the homely moralities that give a spiritual setting to the peasant's daily round of toil; still less to the "philosophic epic" of Parmenides and Empedocles. The Greek epic lives only through the two poems that have survived out of the mass of heroic minstrelsy — the tale of battle and debate of those fifty-one days (in a ten years' war) that witnessed Achilles's wrath and Hector's death, and the picture of adventure and social life in which the central figure is the war-worn, storm-tossed, and home-sick son of Laërtes, whose story the poet has compressed within the span of the forty-one days of the *Odyssey*. The revival of the heroic epic in the Alexandrian and Roman ages is but the faint reflection of the waning splendor of the sun — the *Argonautica*, a *pièce justificative*, written to disprove the contention of the

autocrat of the Museum that the epic of Homer might not suffer imitation, and the other artificial heroic epics — the *Post-homerica*, the *Dionysiaca*, the *Taking of Ilium*, the *Capture of Helen*, and even, with all its sweetness, Musaeus's *Hero and Leander*. From first to last the Greek epic is dominated by Homer.

"In the kingdom of the beautiful in the world below," said Sainte-Beuve, who styled himself a priest of Virgil, "Homer as always and everywhere will be the first and most like a god." The "divine" Homer has been a classic ever since men applied their thought to the evaluation of literature. For to be a "classic" is to possess the ability to persist through different ages and among different peoples because an author discloses, in simple, noble, and beautiful form, some truth of universal humanity, because he lays hold of some passion and gives it a vitality that renews itself, though generation after generation, each with its own moral and intellectual and aesthetic affinities, seems to have exhausted the secret of its power. Homer lives through his responsiveness to a shifting environment, through his power of continual readjustment, and not because he claims the charity of that sympathy vouchsafed by some to the infancy of the race and to those happy children whom we call "the ancients."

It is from the point of view that Homer, through his inexhaustible vitality, has been longer contemporaneous than any other poet of the world that I venture to approach the question of the universality and permanent value of the Greek epic. As a national poet Homer had an unexampled influence on the life and thought of his own people, and he constitutes a dominant part of the cumulative cultural forces of Hellas. He has helped to form the understanding and refine the taste of many great men, and he has been a constant and vivifying influence in European literature. And, finally, the qualities that insured his authority in the past still appeal to the modern world.

A poet who speaks to all the world speaks most of all to his own people. The united voice of Hellas proclaimed Homer as The Poet. To the Greeks, above and beyond Pindar, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, stood the poet of *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. And in a more profound sense than in the case of any teacher in verse Homer was the educator of a nation. More than Hesiod he shaped that idealistic conception of the gods, which, through him implanted in the nation's faith, distinguishes the religion of Hellas from the polytheisms that paralyzed the spirituality of the nearer East.

In Homer's picture of the Trojan war the Greeks, his own people, saw their first national achievement. Through Homer they became conscious of themselves. The Greeks who fought about the deep-eddying Scamander were their ancestors; and in the fortitude, ambition, nobility, resourcefulness of these men and in their caution, pushed to the verge of cunning, they discerned their own spiritual ideals. From Homer youth learned the legends and the religion of the race. Poets, philosophers, statesmen, orators, historians, scientists, thinkers about God and the veriest triflers with human life, all ranks, all ages, all conditions of men knew and treasured his words. It was not only scholars like Aristarchus who had far-reaching command of his verse. Many had learned both *Iliad* and *Odyssey* word for word; Alexander the Great, whose soul burned to emulate Achilles's love of glory, knew the *Iliad* by heart. For centuries professional rhapsodes, attired in gorgeous apparel, declaimed at the public festivals the verses of Homer before vast audiences. A highly gifted people, whose civilization, if measured by the standard of the number of perfected men it produced, may well be pronounced not inferior to our own, acknowledged, in all the vicissitudes of their national life, unswerving allegiance to the sovereignty of their teacher-poet for more than a thousand years.

So varied and so precise indeed was Homer's acquaintance with life that the Greeks regarded his works as the epitome of all knowledge. From him could be learned the arts of eloquence, war, statesmanship, medicine, and even any craft. This authority had no small part in establishing the orthodoxy of the Greeks' belief that a poet was preëminently a teacher, — a doctrine that to the French has now become *l'hérésie de l'enseignement*. The Greeks never surrendered their moral canon of aesthetics, and Strabo inveighs against the Gallic paradox of Eratosthenes that the poet's aim was to delight the mind and not to instruct. Because of the commanding position he enjoyed as the teacher of youth Homer was made the chief object of Plato's attack in his endeavor to utilize the ethical function of poetry as a means to supplant the older morality of the epic by a more spiritual creed. But the poet who represented men as men are and the gods as his age conceived the gods to be was not to be driven from the schools by the passionate protest of the philosopher who could find no place for the educative forces of feeling in a system built on abstract reason. Four centuries after Plato boys were still studying Homer in school. The teacher of the Emperor Julian bade his charge neglect the pantomime dances of the day — "the Phaeacian youth danced in nobler fashion." The Christians fell afoul of Homer as the incarnation of paganism and borrowed some of their weapons from the armory of Plato. St. Augustine's verdict "dulcissime vanus" unites the condemnation of the rigid moralist and the lingering sensibilities of the sinner. But Basil the Great, in the fourth century of our era, encouraged Christian youth to profit by the pagan poet whose every teaching, he said, inclines to virtue.

For the varied exigencies of life the verses of *Iliad* and *Odyssey* had an authority and a pertinence that has been the lot of but one other book. A single line was warrant enough for the "jingoes" of antiquity to back their claim to

others' territory. In a verse built out of Homer the Spartan envoy rejected Gelo's presumptuous demand of leadership as his price for assisting Greece in her struggle for existence against Persia: —

ἦ κε μέγ' οἰμώξειεν ὁ Πελοπίδης Ἀγαμέμνων.

The Roman conqueror of Corinth shed tears when one of his captives, commanded to show his youthful skill in writing, inscribed the verse "Thrice and four times happy the Danaoi who perished there in broad Troy land." The philosopher Hierocles, when scourged in court, flung drops of his blood into the face of his judge, exclaiming with Odysseus,

Come, Cyclops, drink my blood.

To give point, to establish an argument, to suggest to sculptor and painter their ideal, to lend to talk the charm of apt recourse to the poet's art, to furnish matter of dispute alike to the learned, to "corner-buzzers," and to diners-out, to cheer, to console, Homer's words were always on the lips of men.

In every age of the national life Homer renewed himself through his sensitiveness to his surroundings. He had no need of modernization for men at large; that thinkers read into him the ideas of their own times proved his "latent correspondences with human nature." He never became out of date; "clearest-souled" of poets, he never failed to make an immediate appeal to heart and mind. In a larger sense than Dante the poet of a nation, there was in him no mystery of allegory to darken the ways of understanding; no insincerity of belief in the age of chivalry he depicted, as in Tasso or Ariosto; no bias of theological dogma, as in Milton. As he made known the emancipation of the human spirit from Orientalism, so he remained the prophet and the guide of the free Greek mind through all its history.

The permanent value of Homer lies also in the fact that he constitutes a dominant part of the cumulative cultural

forces of our "spiritual ancestors" (as Amiel calls the Greeks) by which the world still lives. Lyric and drama lie nascent in him. Almost every form of the unique literature of the Greeks confesses his authority in thought and language. It is not a small thing for a people that the best comes first. Homer established a standard of distinction which remained a perpetual challenge; he left a legacy of noble artistic ideals; he was the arbiter of taste; he imposed the law of simplicity, lucidity, truth to nature, and self-imposed restraint. Homer first saw the vision of Greece — the equilibrium of moral and physical beauty. Whatsoever things are fair in Greece, whatsoever things the world has inherited from Greece and is not content to let die, these things have their fountain-head in Homer.

The more truly national a poet is, the more readily does he pass the limits of his own nation and enlarge the area of his quickening influence, if he appeals to a common humanity.

Rome is the first station in Homer's progress to the modern world, whose culture unites in the recognition of its historical continuity. It was at Rome that the art of translation of poetry had its first beginning, and Homer was the first poet ever translated. When at last the Latin race, grown to intellectual maturity through Greek tutelage, sought to find a voice at once for its pride as mistress of the world, and for its sense of devotion to the gods who had aided the foundation of the *urbs aeterna*, it found its own Homer in Virgil. No one would have been more astonished than the poet of the *Aeneid* to hear that his poem was thought to be superior or even equal to that of his master, to whom he owed the general movement of his epic, motives both significant and trifling, turns of phraseolgy, and countless matters of detail that made up the dreary catalogue of his literary larcenies compiled by Quintus Octavius Avitus. "Non est erubescendum Vergilio si minorem se Homero vel ipse fatea-

tur," says Macrobius. Virgil's aim was to enfranchise in Latin speech, but in a nobler form than translation, the epic of the sovereign poet

> a quo ceu fonte perenni
> Vatum Pieriis ora rigantur aquis.

To Velleius, Lucan, Silius, Pliny, and Claudian, Homer still remains the type of the immortal poet. But in a burst of admiration on hearing part of the *Aeneid* read aloud, Propertius exulted that his countryman would win the palm of victory over the Greeks. To Juvenal Virgil is the compeer of Homer. Both Homer and Virgil occupy the *arx musicae*, says Priscian. To St. Augustine Virgil is "poeta magnus omniumque praeclarissimus atque optimus." The great controversy has begun.

It is the Roman's position as the poet of Italy, rather than his inherent superiority to Homer, that made Virgil preeminent in the falling Western Empire and in the Middle Ages. While in the East Homer had inherited his large legacy of fame and continued without serious interruption his hold on the culture of the times, in Italy, with the division of the Empire, the ability to read Greek was almost lost by the fifth century. Knowledge of Homer was kept alive in the West by the vogue of Virgil, and it is his fellow-countryman rather than "that Greek, most cherished by the Nine" whom Dante is naturally led to choose as his guide to the dolorous realms of death. There is scarcely any touch of indebtedness to Homer in the *Divine Comedy;* yet with truth to fact and to Virgil's modesty Dante makes his Master say :—

> Mark him
> Who in his right hand bears that falchion keen,
> The other three preceding, as their lord.
> This is that Homer of all bards supreme.

Petrarch stands on the threshold of the revival of Greek studies. He could not read Greek, but he wrote an "enthu-

siastic letter" to Homer. In the National Library at Paris there is a copy of a Latin translation of the *Odyssey*, at the end of which, in a faltering hand, are notes written by the dying poet.

Not until Homer was printed (in 1488) did he really reappear in the West. The day of the indiscriminate taste of the Middle Ages had passed. Soon the poet was devoured by the Humanists in the "holy orgy" of the Renaissance. "I am refreshed and fed by the sight of his words (writes Erasmus) even when I cannot understand him." The second Scaliger, who said that "not to know Greek was to know nothing," as a youth read Homer without a teacher in twenty-one days.

With the sixteenth century there begins that wider acquaintance with the poet which distinguishes the culture of modern Europe. Each nation in turn caught the passion for Greek and for Homer. Like Geneva, in the proud words of a participant in the congress of diplomatists at Vienna, Homer was "not a grain of sand, but a grain of musk that filled all Europe." In the sixteenth century there was published an edition or a translation of the poet, either entire or in part, on an average every eighteen months.

Inspired by Homer to write the *Franciade*, Ronsard gives himself up to an intellectual debauch: —

> Je veux lire en trois jours l'Iliade d'Homère.»

He shuts himself up in his room and issues order to his servant: —

> Au reste, si un Dieu vouloit pour moi descendre
> Du ciel, ferme la porte et ne le laisse entrer.»

Homer stood in the centre of the battle begun by Perrault in 1687 as to the relative superiority of the ancients and the moderns. To the champions of the ancients Homer was the absolute norm for all other epic poets; the champions of the moderns proclaimed that he was soon to be dethroned, as

Aristotle had already been dethroned; that he was "tout monstrueux" because he descended to the meanness of mentioning things unbecoming a heroic poet. To the age of Louis XIV the epic bard must have a courtier's fastidious nicety of taste. Homer's "black beans and peas" must become "golden grain." Says the Earl of Roscommon:—

> For who without a qualm hath ever look'd
> On holy garbage though by Homer cook'd,
> Whose toiling heroes and whose wounded gods
> Make some suspect he snores as well as nods?

And Fitzgerald, almost in our own time, could not forgive Homer for his "brutal gods and heroes," though the genial Celt confesses that he distrusts his own taste in the face of the approbation of all the rest of the world.

The agitation of literary judgments in the early part of the eighteenth century, with all its aberrancies, clarified the understanding of Homer's art: the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were not models to follow but masterpieces to inform the judgment; they were not allegories composed to subserve a moral purpose or to represent the conflict of civilization with barbarism. But the age was not ripe for the appreciation of Homer's naturalness, simplicity, and plainness.

The decline of classicism and the awakening to nature meant the rediscovery of Homer. Virgil, to whom excellence in judgment had been assigned, as invention to Homer, lost, except in France, his position of preëminence. Racine had read Homer with ease, Bossuet had known him by heart — and there is a story that he regularly began the composition of his orations by reading his favorite Greek poet. In *Télémaque* Fénelon had cast the spirit of Christianity over an Odyssean epic tinged with ethics and philosophy. But the genius of France was temperamentally Virgilian. Voltaire reviled Homer as he reviled Shakespeare. The appreciation of Homer had to wait for André Chénier, Bernardin de Saint Pierre, and Châteaubriand.

But Germany was meantime swept by a contagion of enthusiasm for Hellenism. Schiller said that if a man has lived only to read the twenty-third *Iliad*, he cannot complain about life; and from his musing over Homer, his companion in his solitary walks in the valley of the Lahn, came Goethe's first zeal for the poet, who (he said) had, together with Polygnotus, taught him every day that "in our own life here above ground we have, properly speaking, to enact Hell."

In England the appreciation of Homer had never suffered eclipse. Milton molded his verse on Virgil's, but his favorite book, next to the Bible, was Homer; and his daughter Dorothy used to read to her father in his blindness the verses of the poet whom all the world then regarded as the blind bard of Chios. Statesmen in solemn and in sportive mood had recourse to the poet's words which Englishmen, like the Greeks themselves, could fit into the occurrences of life. The dying Lord Granville turned for a moment from consideration of the preliminary articles of the Treaty of Paris to repeat the speech of Sarpedon: —

"Ah, friend, if once escaped from this battle, we were forever to be ageless and immortal, neither would I myself fight in the foremost ranks, nor would I send thee into the war that giveth men renown, but now — for assuredly ten thousand fates of death do every way beset us, and these no mortal may escape or avoid — now let us go forward." [1]

Sheridan took Lord Belgrave to task for misquoting Homer in the House of Commons. But his latest biographer pronounces apocryphal the story that when a member of the House fresh from the University ended his speech with a passage from Demosthenes, Sheridan began his reply with the words,

τὸν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη Σεριδάνιος ἥρως.

[1] The translations cited in this article are from Lang, Leaf, and Myers's *Iliad* and from Butcher and Lang's *Odyssey*.

Good Dr. Harrison in *Amelia* is ready with his Homer, and Mrs. Atkinson thinks him superior to all other writers. As captain of the Hampshire grenadiers, and a few years before he conceived the idea of his great work, Gibbon read Homer entire. Shelley said that "as a poet Homer must be acknowledged to excel Shakespeare in the truth, the harmony, the sustained grandeur, the satisfying completeness of his images."

To Carlyle, the poet of "the richest-toned artless music" made equal appeal as to Milton: "I love it" (the *Iliad*), he writes in a letter in 1834, "better than any other book, I think, except the Bible." The *French Revolution*, which was to be "such a book, quite an epic poem, an apotheosis of sansculottism," is full of Homeric reminiscences.

Those who love Homer find him again in part in Clough's *Bothie*. To Tennyson his own *Morte d'Arthur* was one of the twelve books of a great epic, "faint Homeric echoes, nothing worth." *Oenone*, *Ulysses*, *Lucretius*, *The Princess*, attest the poet's love, Virgilian as he was, for "the Ionian father of the rest." To Gladstone, Homer was a "palace of enchantment," and Matthew Arnold pronounced judgment that *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are the most important poetical monuments in existence.

Such, then, has Homer been to the remoter and the nearer past. What claim has he to occupy a permanent place in the culture of the future?

We are far removed from the temper of mind of the men of the Renaissance, who "went down on their knees" to the Greeks. To-day, the brilliant advance of the physical sciences and the rise of the social sciences tend to displace the centre of gravity of the world's culture. Those who love the ancient classics have no quarrel with science, but they are disturbed at the situation in our own country, where we are now facing the danger of a society apparently intent on depriving itself of that general knowledge of Homer at first-

hand which has marked the culture of Europe for the last four hundred years. "The further from the spring, the more water loses its taste and strength," Luther said, when he found he needed Greek to interpret the *New Testament;* and his utterance loses none of its truth when applied to the language of Homer:

> Ce langage sonore aux douceurs souveraines,
> Le plus beau qui soit né sur les lèvres humaines.

Homer's speech is born of his race and mirrors the total effect of all that appeals to the finer outward sense; it is the flower of Greece in its springtime; it is energetic, harmonious, musical, varied, abounding in life. The diction of the poet is itself confederate to the precision of his vision and the brilliance of his external outline. Homer is vivid because his visual imagery is concrete and because he translates action and emotion into simple yet penetrating language. His style has ease even when it is torrential in its vehemence; it can be plain without losing its nobility. Matthew Arnold's most effective point in his analysis of Homeric diction is that Homer's style retains its distinction alike when the theme is elevated and when it is humble; that it attains magniloquence and avoids tumidity.

But Homer's language and his verse, the spiritual media of his ideas and the echoes of his heroic theme, mean less to the mass of men (who will always read him by proxy) than his picture of human life and of the visible sphere of man's activities.

Were Homer not a poet, he might be called an encyclopaedist. Unobtrusive there lie in *Iliad* and *Odyssey* materials for the study of an entire age more abundant than exist in the case of any other ancient people, the Jews alone excepted. The age he mirrors was an age of justice and of moral feeling, though law and morality were still unborn. It was an age when men had come to recognize that war was dreadful, and yet loved battle; and no one, not even Tolstoi, has

ever pictured war with the vividness of Homer. It was an age when man turned readily to God, upon whom rested his entire dependence; when the primal law of duty was to keep thy word, to honor thy father and thy mother, and to show mercy to the beggar and the suppliant within thy gates. It was an age when belief in the visible presence of his gods brought no enfeeblement of endeavor, but rather spurred man to a completer manifestation of his humanity. Labor was still noble. The spirit of generosity was abroad. Women were treated with a chivalry unknown to the later days of paganism. Insolence and lust had their end appointed in the divine resentment. It was the age when men were strong and brave, and instinctively refined; and, though uncheered by the consolation of a later faith, confronted the thought of eternal gloom in the hereafter with a resignation born neither of apathy nor of despair.

Upon the external world of Homer science has now laid her hand. *Iliad* and *Odyssey* have become the quarry of the sociologist and anthropologist. But the lover of poetry will resist an appreciation of the poet which discovers his only claim to permanence in the fact that he is the earliest literary witness to the life of man in Europe; which registers with equal impartiality the boasting of Homer's heroes and the Fijian abuse of their besieged enemies, and equates in the cold light of science the lamentation over Hector's corpse uttered by "that savage woman" Andromache, with the somersaults of a newly bereaved wife in Queensland and the ceremonial wailing of the people of the Zambezi.

But science may not depoetize a dream. To the sociologist Homer will justly remain a document of inestimable value; but to a larger world he makes appeal, not because he provides material to be pigeonholed into Spencer's *Sociology* or Ratzel's *History of Mankind*, but because he views human life, as a poet views it, through a prism that tints the world with golden gleams.

And as a poet Homer's permanence is insured because of his unique place in the literature of the world. The oldest monuments of European poetry, *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are akin both to the "popular" epic (if one must retain that squinting expression) and to the literary epic. It has not been without a struggle that criticism has attained to the just perspective of their position. Two centuries ago they were measured by an abstract standard of literary art which postulated an ideal model capable of reproduction in any language, in any nation, and in any age. They were compared directly with the *Aeneid* and *Paradise Lost*, as if Homer was the poet of a mature and artificial civilization. A century ago it was an axiom of the critic that Homer was a writer of ballad poetry.

We have at last won a just estimate of *Iliad* and *Odyssey* at least on this point. They are neither ballads nor "popular" epics like the Arthurian and Carlovingian romances or the *Nibelungenlied*, nor are they immediately comparable to the *Aeneid*, the *Jerusalem Delivered*, the *Divine Comedy*, or *Paradise Lost*.

To the "popular" epic they are related because they are indigenous and appeal to the spontaneous sympathy of an entire nation, because they deal with events that had won a secure place in the national imagination, because their heroes embody national ideals, because the utterance of their poet is undisturbed by the pressure of personality, with its passing beliefs, its idiosyncrasies, and its constant inclination to force to the front the dissonance of the present and the past. Furthermore, Homer's world has the finality of self-completeness, and that moral harmony which displays no discord between aspiration and achievement. In action, thought, and sentiment, Homer touches common life closely, and even in the Odyssean realm of fancy the human element preponderates over the supernatural. Homer, again, is "popular" because he has perfect ease and grace and vivid-

ness, because he has amplitude and secures totality of impression by fullness of landscape. Like the popular epics, Homer is plain in thought and plain in style. But, unlike these epics, he is also rapid, and he is above all noble.

Iliad and *Odyssey* are the compeers of the great literary epics because of the elevation and wide sweep of the mind of their poet, because of their pervasive artistic excellence in which the nobility of the style answers the nobility of human nature, and because of their abiding and quickening influence on those "sane, well-trained minds of very high calibre whose admiration and delight (as Matthew Arnold said) is the test of supreme excellence in literature."

The heroic epic of the Greeks, with its likeness both to the *Volksepos* and to the literary epic, occupies a place peculiarly its own. In Greece alone the epic, as an artistic form of poetry, came first. In Greece alone the poet did not have to balance alternatives; he whom the Muses inspired was in the earliest period a singer of heroic lays, in the next age a lyric poet, in the next a dramatist. The Greek epic is thus isolated not only because, like all Greek literature, it is untouched by foreign influence, but also because it is the earliest product of that literature. By its isolation the Greek epic gains its supreme originality in comparison with all later poetry which lies under the attraction of the thoughts and ways of thought of the past. Though Homer stands at the end of the heroic age, in the freshness, sincerity, and vividness with which he views the many-colored pageant of human life, he seems almost dissociated from any past. For his sentiment is projected warm from the heart of a race in its adolescence; his words express, do not suggest; his thought is not distilled, does not build any fabric of its own subtle fancy. Homer does not bring a fruitage of ideas already ripened into deeper mellowness because they have been voiced by poets of the past and enriched by the experience of men of different race from age to age. He is un-

touched by the sense of the mysteries of things, by the sense of life's disharmonies that is born of the maturity of the race of men. In his verse there is none of that proud dignity that lingers in the steady and solemn cadences of Virgil, the living voice of Rome's imperial rule. Alone of the great epic poets of the world he has not gleaned amid "alien corn."

Virgil and Dante and Milton furnish to the scholar the refined delight of discovering the contact of mind with mind in associative reminiscence. But if Homer lacks this charm, he has at least escaped the perils of indirectness and of labored allusiveness. The leaves which typify to him the passing of the generations of men are not strewn to his fancy in some Greek Vallombrosa. Homer displays no sense of the conscious effort of literary craftsmanship; the progress of his ideas is not choked by undergrowths of thought; he is not subject to the tyranny of a style, like Milton's, that does not give ample air to the fullness of his thought; of all epic poets he is freest from bad ornament; and he never shows that lack of precision in sympathy which attends the study of man and the visible world through books. Virgil looks at both through Homer's eyes; he does not recreate in his own soul the emotion of his heroes — he has an *index pathologicus* made up chiefly out of Homer. Virgil is, too, a courtier; the muse of Homer keeps her gaze level in the presence of the great, and the poet is merely her interpreter. In Dante philosophy is striving to translate thought into sensible form. Milton contemplates human life with the vision of a priest.

At the outset, Greek poetry looks with the keenness of a painter directly at nature and at man. *Ut pictura poesis* is pervasively true of Homer, who sees only with his own eyes. Scaliger, in scorn of the poet, says that he describes the felling of a tree as if he were a carpenter; and some German thinks the poet's knowledge of human anatomy is such that he must have been an army-surgeon. With what

nice minuteness he observes nature's shifting spectacle—the warring of the winds; the fury of the tempest, the rocking ship, and the angry god beneath the waves; the roar of the torrent heard by the lonely shepherd on the hills; the light that flashed from Achilles's spear before it pierced Hector he likens to Hesperus, "fairest of all stars set in heaven."

Homer, too, foreshadows the national conception of natural beauty, which found greater charm in the loveliness of meadow and stream than in the majestic splendor of mountain heights and ocean. To Homer nature is not something distinct from man in the sense of Rousseau. He does not recognize an animate and an inanimate nature. He paints nature, as a Greek paints it, with man as spectator or auditor of her sights and sounds; he rarely finds in nature the mirror of man's mental state; as he does when Patroclus says to Achilles: "the gray sea and rugged precipices brought thee forth, for rugged is thy heart."

The Greek poet moves by preference in the world of man. Homer is the interpreter of the Muse in whose omniscience fact and fancy have already merged their distinctive outlines; he is not an historian, to whom events are of prime value while their human agents stand in the second line. Man is the central and driving force in Homer. "Upon Homer's hero depends his world." Virgil's hero shines as the divinely appointed founder of Rome, and his every action is controlled by the decrees of the gods. Tasso's heroes shine through reflection of their purpose to free the tomb of Christ. But though it was the will of Zeus that Troy should fall, the warriors on the Trojan plain gain no individual lustre through their joint heroic enterprise. In the panorama of the moving accidents of the *Odyssey*, in all the shifting spectacle of dangers and enchantments, it is what Odysseus does and feels, not what he sees and hears, that is the main spring of interest. The external world is there for man, not man for the external world. The immortals

themselves have their place on Olympus or on Ida or beneath the gray sea only to behold the action that is the expression of the will of man. In the centre of things is man swayed by passion and unchecked save by moral restraint, self-imposed, but figured as obedience to the promptings of the divine regents of the world. In this human sphere, admitting the verification of experience, will and action are justified by speech. About half of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* consists of speeches; with good reason did Plato and Aristotle regard Homer as the father of the drama. The *Iliad* excels in dramatic energy, the *Odyssey* in picturesque effect; but in both poems it is dramatic situation that gives intense vitality and vividness to Homer's men and women, who are all creatures of flesh and blood, and embody the essential characteristics of human nature. Medea, Dido, Francesca da Rimini, Ugolino, Rinaldo, Roland, Brunhilde, Lear and Lady Macbeth are not more inalienable possessions of the world's imagination than Achilles, Ajax, Diomed, Odysseus, Hector, Paris, Helen, Penelope, and Nausicaa.

It is Homer's limitless faculty of invention that gives to the denizens of his human sphere such varied individuality. On his epic scene move graybeards and youths, maidens and matrons, the innocent and the wanton, kings and beggars, princes and demagogues, sages and satirists, rebels and faithful vassals, men of action and men of words — a great assembly of the differences of human faculty and human estate — while high above all the rest towers Peleus's matchless son; Odysseus, undaunted in every danger; Hector, who pardons her who is the cause of his ruin, and is the ideal of the pagan hero in the Christian epic; the woman of the fatal gift of beauty who gazes with shuddering into the vistas of memory; and that other wife, unbetrayed to surrender of her constancy by twenty long years of watching and waiting for the home-coming of her lord. Above and below and among this catholic and gracious humanity move

in supremely beautiful and august forms the divine incarnations of majesty and grace, dignity and loveliness, wisdom and strength.

Homer's characters are limned only in outline and do not appear before us complete; they develop as we watch their attractions and repulsions, perpetually varying in their interrelations. They do not, like Virgil's heroes, exist for themselves alone. And the Greek poet knows well that in literature it is speech, rather than description of action, that serves best to mark the distinctive temper of individuality.

All Homer's heroes, save only Thersites, are brave. But courage has its spiritual anatomy: Agamemnon and Menelaus and Ajax, Idomeneus and Sarpedon and Hector, are all differently brave. Other epic poets do not succeed in keeping Homer's precision of rudimentary outline in marking individuality. Aeneas is an aggregation of piety; Siegfried is an aggregation of excellence. No Homeric hero, except perhaps Diomed, embodies the ideal of flawlessness inherent in the romanticism of the Frank on either side of the Rhine. Achilles excels all the rest in action and in speech. He burns with indignation at all injustice whether he or another is its victim; but he is seen in nature's mirror, not through the prism of idealism; he discovers a momentary savagery at the end of a war that has demoralized society in arms.

The men and women of Homer are our heroized selves, and they are all, save only Penelope perhaps, creatures of vigorous action. The range of their action is as varied as are the incidents that crowd the canvas of the poet. Difficulties and dangers on land and sea, battle in countless forms, the gentler scenes of peace and domestic life, move before our eyes in an ever shifting panorama. But if action is omnipresent and lends an intensity of interest that enthralls the reader, no less significant are the thoughts and sentiments of the actors in this epic drama. Stirred by natural passion and

energy and weaponed with a fine-tempered language, they speak to us of human life in the language of a common humanity; and whether the appeal is to understanding or emotion, it is of universal human interest. Like the women who wail over Patroclus, "in semblance for the dead, but each for her own misery," so the joys and sorrows of successive ages find individual voice in the joys and sorrows of Homer's men and women. Though the poet does not search for scenes of tenderness and pity, by a slightest touch, often by what he leaves unsaid, he sounds the chords of pathos; when the eyes are choked with tears or when the heart is aflame, absolute simplicity surpasses all studied craftsmanship.

The thoughts and sentiments uttered by Homeric personages are compacted of a general experience; they rouse the spirit, they touch the heart, they inform the understanding; they have the note of eternity.

"Dear one," says Hector to Andromache, "I pray thee not to be of oversorrowful heart; no man against my fate shall hurl me to Hades: only destiny, I ween, no man hath ever escaped, be he coward or be he valiant, when once he hath been born."

Hector and his wife — "the stately flower of perfect wifehood" — have realized the substance of Odysseus's prayer for the maiden Nausicaa: "And may the gods grant thee all thy heart's desire: a husband and a home, and a mind at one with his may they give — a good gift, for there is nothing mightier and nobler than when man and wife are of one heart and mind in a house."

In the presence of death the god of light says to the immortals: "It must be that many a man lose even some dearer one than this, his very own brother or perchance a son, yet bringeth he his wailing and lamentation to an end, for an enduring heart have the Fates given unto men."

When Glaucus has been accosted by Diomed in the press of battle, he says: "Son of Tydeus, of great soul, why

askest thou my race? Even as are the generations of leaves such are those likewise of men; the leaves that be the wind scattereth over the earth, and the forest buddeth and putteth forth more again, when the season of spring is at hand; so of the generations of men one springeth up and another passeth away."

In the fifth *Iliad* when Diomed has routed his mortal foes and even turns to encounter Apollo, he is rebuked: "Desire not to match thy spirit with gods, since there is no comparison of the race of immortal gods and of men that walk upon the earth."

But if mortal men must give way before the gods whom they revere, they are never marionettes in the hands of the puissant Olympians. Man's action may be modified or diverted by the direct influence of a god; but man's will is never rudely overborne without a struggle, never destroyed by divine command. Even those decisions which are apparently suddenly formed on the appearance of a god are already dormant in the hero's mind. The divine epiphany is only the external sign of the reaction of the soul.

As to the gods themselves, though Milton may regulate his divine mechanism with a profounder logic, yet Homer has an artistic advantage over all the Christian poets in the multiplicity of his supernatural beings, as he has also in the range of his imagery. The sense of reality of Homer's divine agents, the direct and visible participants in human affairs, lends to the Greek epic a sincerity and a naturalness beyond the power of later art to simulate. For the gods of Homer are virtually men in whom the limits of human physical finiteness have been extended or men freed entirely from these limits. If they are therefore less awful and sublime than the supernatural agents of other poets, they are not philosophical or theological conceptions, as in Virgil and Milton, which have taken on material form because they were otherwise incapable of visualization.

But we may not demand of a national epic impregnated with the Stoic conception of the world, or of epics founded on a revealed religion, the free play of the imaginative instinct with regard to the divine that marks the adolescence of the Hellenic race. If Homer's themes cannot vie in implicit grandeur with Virgil's or Dante's or Tasso's or Milton's, it is also to be borne in mind that it is not (as Arnold reminds us) the nature of their subject which occasions the fine style of the greatest artists in words; as it is also not the nature of their theme that is the sole spring of their ideas

On Man, on Nature and on Human Life.

As the immortals in Homer know each other whenever they meet and in whatever disguise, so the greatest poets of the world are akin, whatever their theme. It is Homer's province to depict in all its freshness and strength and beauty the irrecoverable youth of the world, to trace the lineaments of human life still so simplified to nature that it rests on the primal emotions of the heart, to picture an astonishing variety of incident, and with minute precision to set forth abundant riches of human experience, to catch the spirit of an age, and to give more than any other poet of the Greeks themselves the very essence of the Greek spirit.

If poetry is only dreamland, if the warring Greeks and Trojans are as unsubstantial as Circe's spells, this far-off poet of another clime sends us (as do our growing years) into glad exile to our dreams.

HERBERT WEIR SMYTH.

LYRIC POETRY

DIFFICULT as it is to summarize aptly the character of Greek literature as a whole, such an *aperçu* is quite as hard to achieve for one of its most interesting parts, the lyric poetry. For this poetry is the product of many regions and periods, uses many different forms of Greek language to express itself, and reveals to us not only essential tribal peculiarities, but also the marked individuality of the singer, and so illustrates every mood of the Greek mind. The strongest contrast to this many-sidedness of the lyric is afforded by the drama and oratory. These, un-Attic as their beginnings may have been, are essentially Attic as far as we can trace them; the Greek in which they are preserved is almost exclusively Attic, their spirit not less Athenian; and the period within which their budding, their flowering, and the beginning of their decay may be watched is fairly well limited to the two centuries during which Athens was the intellectual leader of Greece.

But for a thorough study of the Greek lyric poetry one must explore every highway and byway of the literature; alike the earliest epics and the latest writers of Byzantine times, not only because many of the most precious remains of the lyric are embedded, in the form of quotations, in the later writings, but because in even the earliest epic we hear the echo of voices of a still remoter age, chanting songs of rejoicing or lament. The drama, too, contains some of the noblest productions of the Hellenic lyric genius. Nor is our task wholly done when the literature has been ransacked. To comprehend the occasions which called forth much of the

Greek song, we must learn to know Greek manners and customs, both secular and religious. There was hardly an occasion in the life of Greece which did not find its accompaniment of song. The language itself sang, one may say with little exaggeration, and fondness for beauty of poetic form was innate in the Hellenic character. The matchless remains of the lyric left us by the greatest poets are seen to have been developed out of popular forms, and so, with all their elaboration, to have kept in touch with the life of the nation as a whole. If I may repeat a comparison used in a recent lecture, "it is everywhere as though we were viewing a garden, the flowers in which are only better bred specimens of the sorts to be found all about, outside the wall." Occasionally in most unexpected places we come upon proof of the keenness of this Greek sense of form. Here and there a broken stone has kept faithful record of a touching grief or an honest pride in achievement, sometimes phrased in artistic verse, sometimes in a form that cannot quite reach the true poetic grace of utterance. For example, a rudely inscribed stone found some fifteen years ago at Eretria in Euboea bears the epitaph of a sailor, dating from perhaps 500 B.C., which may be explained as the affectionate tribute of a sorrowing shipmate. The letters begin in fairly orderly fashion, but at the end are crowded into a hopeless tangle; some of the words are misspelled; the metre is very faulty; but the epitaph is not bad poetry for all that, and the lyric touch of style is there. It reads in translation: —

> Here Philo lies; to him that sailed the wave
> Earth scanty blessings in his lifetime gave,
> And now — a grave.

The study of Greek lyric is very largely a study of disjointed fragments. In no part of the literature has time worked more ruthless havoc. In Symonds's fine comparison, the fragments preserved are like the islands in the Aegean;

we know they are but the summits of mountain-chains that lie hidden far below the surface of the sea. Much of the destruction has been inevitable; but it is hard to reconcile ourselves to the burning — if the account is true — of the MSS. of Alcaeus and Sappho at Rome in 1073, under Pope Gregory VII. Bergk's collection of the lyric poets, exhaustive when the latest edition was published in 1882, contains all that was then known of one hundred and ten poets, many of whom stand but as shadows of mighty names, and numerous fragments that were anonymous even to the scholars of Alexandria and Rome. Classical scholars await with impatience each new publication of papyri discovered in Egyptian tombs, for these, among thousands of documents and letters, now and then yield a precious bit of literature, although very rarely anything of such extent or importance as the unique MS. of Bacchylides discovered in 1896. Only four lyric poets, Theognis, Pindar, Bacchylides, and Timotheus, have come down to us through the medium of individual MSS., if we except a few brief fragments rescued from papyri, among which are some of Sappho, some of Alcaeus, some of Corinna, and a splendid one which has with great probability been assigned to Archilochus. But in the main it is nearly as true as it was thirty years ago that we know the Greek lyric poets, Theognis, Pindar, and Bacchylides excepted, only from quotation in later writers.

One kind of quotation, naturally the least satisfactory, is where single words or brief phrases have been preserved by compilers of obsolete or poetical expressions, writers on grammar and dialect, makers of books of reference; of such we have hundreds, and any such stray notice may one day enable us to identify a new fragment of importance. Identification is possible only because some scholar recognizes in the deciphered text something — it may be a passage of considerable length or merely a few words — that he had seen elsewhere. Thus a fragment of over one hundred and

thirty lines (some of them mutilated beyond recognition), found in 1855, was recognized as part of a poem by Alcman because one of the lines, almost meaningless by itself, had been quoted by an ancient commentator on Homer.

Or the quotation may be of one or more verses adduced to illustrate metrical principles or theories. A great proportion of what we know of Sappho has come to us in one or the other of these ways. The fragment in which a late-marrying girl is compared to the apple on the topmost bough: "Like the sweet apple that blushes on the top bough, atop of the topmost, and the apple-gatherers forgot it — no, not forgot it, but could not reach it" — these exquisite lines are quoted merely to illustrate the word for the so-called "sweet-apple," *i.e.* an apple grown by grafting on a quince-tree. It is a most tantalizing mode of citation, often breaking off short in the middle of a phrase; quite as if we had to form a judgment of an English poet from a single torn page containing a part of the "Table of First Lines." To take another instance, we know from various sources that Timocreon of Rhodes wrote most bitter attacks upon his contemporaries Themistocles and Simonides, with the latter of whom he seems to have carried on a lively controversy. A writer on metric quotes the beginning of a poem by him written in a particularly sarcastic and mocking measure, as follows (it is hard to read it without singing it): —

Σικελὸς κομψὸς ἀνὴρ	∪ ∪ — — ∪ ∪ —
ποτὶ τὰν ματέρ' ἔφα	∪ ∪ — — ∪ ∪ —

"A pretty man of Sicily said to his mother —" and there he stops. It is a most promising opening for a satirical poem, but probably we shall never hear what the mother heard. Simonides is known to have spent the last years of his life in Sicily; and those who enjoy guessing may perhaps imagine here the beginning of a lampoon upon him, describing the effect of his personality upon some Sicilian dandy.

But the pointing of morals and the adorning of tales have preserved to our use and profit the greatest number of scraps of the classical lyric. To Plutarch, Strabo, Athenaeus, and others, including several Fathers of the Church, we owe most of the lyric fragments that we possess. The two best pieces of Sappho have been saved to us by the rhetoricians Dionysius of Halicarnassus and the so-called Longinus, author of the famous treatise "On the Sublime."[1]

It has long been a commonplace of Greek literary history that until late Alexandrian times the Greeks used no satisfactory comprehensive term for what has ever since then been styled "lyric" poetry. This want was undoubtedly due to the extreme variety of the classes of poems which could not be included under the epic or the drama. These were well-marked divisions of poetry, many as their sub-

[1] An interesting but difficult question, for the solution of which the evidence is very incomplete, is whether tradition is correct in ascribing to Alexandrian scholars the formation of a "canon" or model collection of the nine best lyric poets of the classical period. The earliest datable *direct* references to these nine poets as forming a class by themselves are found in a passage of Seneca (about the middle of the first century after Christ), in Petronius (about the same time), and in Quintilian, towards the end of the same century. But when Horace, in the ode prefixed to the collection which he dedicated to Maecenas in the year 23 B.C., at the age of 42, expresses the hope that he too may be counted among the *lyrici vates*, he is probably alluding to a universally recognized group. An epigram in the Greek Anthology (A. P. ix. 184) invokes, also as though forming a group by themselves, the same nine poets that make up the so-called "Alexandrian Canon"; "be gracious," the author says, "ye that form the beginning and the end of all lyric." But unfortunately author and date of the epigram are unknown. It may go back to about 200 B.C., and thus form an indirect proof of the existence of the Canon at that time. About eleven years ago Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, in an elaborate essay, tried to prove that these nine poets, far from having been put into a class by themselves as representing the highest degree and standard of excellence, were in fact the only ones whose works had survived the destruction of time down to the third century before Christ. Though backed by Wilamowitz's extraordinary learning and acuteness, the theory can hardly be regarded as proved. Such wholesale destruction of the older literature, by 300 or 250 B.C., as it implies, has not yet been made credible.

divisions might be; but the inclusion of all other kinds into one group offered many difficulties. The most that could be said in common of them was that they were neither epic nor dramatic; very much as, in the field of Greek dialectology, everything was "Aeolic" that was neither Ionic nor Doric.

The term "lyric," which seems to have been first used in this connection about 100 B.C., is literally too broad, for it should mean "sung to the lyre," and if pressed should include the epic, which originally was doubtless always chanted with that accompaniment; and it should exclude the whole body of elegiac poetry, a very extensive and important development in the history of Greek lyric, which was at first intoned or chanted with an accompaniment of the flute. Another name much used is "melic" poetry; μελικὴ ποίησις is poetry that is "articulated," that is, divided into members, or stanzas, not composed in verses of identical structure following one another to any desired extent. But fortunately convenience prevailed over etymological consistency, and the two expressions have become fairly well fixed in literary usage. I shall here employ them in the sense oftenest given them: "lyric" will be the wider term, including first the elegiac and the iambic verse, which in historical times came to be recited or declaimed, no longer chanted; and, secondly, the many varieties of "melic" poetry which among Greek people in the classical period (whatever the Roman usage may have been) were always composed as songs.

The various forms of Greek lyric poetry, in particular of melic poetry, are unintelligible except as connected with music. The "book-lyric" simply did not exist before Alexandrian times; and to attempt a judgment of Greek lyric upon principles applicable to the Roman is infallibly to go far astray. There was no such "publication" of poetry in the Greek towns of 600 or 500 B.C. as was possible in the

Rome of Augustus, and no such "reading public." In fact, it seems unlikely that any two copies of a text of Sappho's poems, current a few years after her death, were exactly alike, as copies of one and the same edition of a book produced by the mechanical process of printing are exactly alike to-day. Perhaps no two early MSS. included exactly the same pieces.

The musical forms upon which the lyric verse-structure is based were in their origin probably dance-measures, or mostly so, and the whole choral lyric, throughout its history, remains in close touch with the dance.

It is equally important to remember that all Greek lyric is essentially "occasional poetry" in the best sense, *i.e.* verse produced for special occasions, and preserved, if at all, because it was thought to be worth preserving. For every piece thus saved, hundreds of others must have been soon forgotten. It is characteristic of the Greek view of "literature" that only that which had been carefully worked out, according to a definite plan, was regarded as really worth while. A stray line from Critias, the contemporary and friend of Socrates, says: —

ἐκ μελέτης πλείους ἢ φύσεως συνετοί

"more are wise by training than by nature." Goethe's

> Ein guter Mensch in seinem dunklen Drange
> Ist sich des rechten Weges wohl bewusst

is altogether at variance with the Greek view.[1]

The occasions for which lyric poetry was composed were of every conceivable kind. With the fondness for pigeonholing which was characteristic of them, the literary historians of antiquity undertook to classify the vast number

[1] Aristotle, indeed, says (*Poetics*, ch. 17): διὸ εὐφυοῦς ἡ ποιητικὴ ἐστιν ἢ μανικοῦ, "Hence poetry implies either a happy gift of nature or a strain of madness" (Butcher's transl.); but Aristotle would probably have been the last to maintain that the εὐφυής or the μανικός did not need μελέτη.

of songs and poems then accessible according to the purposes for which they were composed. One such classification we still have. Though undoubtedly based on earlier formulations, it comes to us from the third century after Christ; and even so, indirectly and incompletely, being known only from copious extracts made from it six hundred years later. The classification is not exhaustive, and not wholly satisfactory even as far as it goes. It mentions twenty-one kinds of "melic poems," named according to the occasions for which they were written. By no means all of them are represented by existing fragments. Some of the most important of them are: The Hymn; the Prosodion, or Processional; the Paean, mostly a song of thanksgiving or praise; the Dithyramb, sung in honor of Dionysus; the Nome, a form of composition of great elaborateness, sometimes entirely instrumental and so lying beyond the boundary of poetry, but generally comprising a text of complicated structure; the Enkomion, or Laudation; the Epinikion, or Song of Victory; the Skolion, or Drinking Song — a very large and important class; the Wedding Song; and the Partheneion, or Chorus of Girls.

Of all these the Epinikion is best known to us, chiefly from Pindar, of whose odes of victory over forty have come down to us, and from Bacchylides; we have a fairly good specimen of a Dithyramb of the later type, by Timotheus; some examples of the Skolia; and a very interesting fragment of a Partheneion by Alcman. Of many of the other kinds we have brief fragments. We owe the preservation of many pieces and fragments to the custom of singing at feasts. Favorite poems were included in collections made for purely practical use as song-books.

Another principle of classification must be noticed, of equal importance with that just mentioned, in fact to a certain extent implied in it: that which divides the poems of Greek lyric into poems intended for a single voice, whether

to be intoned or sung, and those intended for a chorus, which could only be sung. The first great group again separates itself naturally into three: (1) poems in the elegiac distich, *i.e.* a dactylic hexameter followed by a so-called pentameter; (2) poems in the various iambic measures, whether in iambic trimeters repeated *ad libitum* or in other and more complicated forms; and (3) the "individual lyric" of Lesbos and Ionia, as represented by Alcaeus, Sappho, and Anacreon, in a great variety of metres. The forms included under (1) and (2) underwent such elaborate development as to constitute in effect a separate division of poetry, which soon came to be sharply differentiated from poetry of the third type or Lesbian and Ionic melic. The connection of elegiac and iambic poetry with music grew slighter and slighter, until finally it was given up, the verses being henceforth merely recited.

Those who are unfamiliar with Greek poetry at first hand may not unnaturally ask why it should be classified in this way; why according to the metre? The answer (of prime importance for the history of Greek literature) is this: certain forms of verse became intimately associated with certain types of literature, often to the exclusion of other forms. The close correspondence — so dear to the Greek heart — between matter and form is seen to particular advantage in this field of the literature. Again, while many poets are known to have used many forms of verse (as we should naturally expect them to do), there was always some one field of poetry in which each one was particularly at home. Probably most Greek poets tried their hand at the elegiac distich after it had become popular, but Simonides is the first poet of the *choral* lyric of whom this is definitely known. He was particularly skilful in the epigram, but we do not find that he composed longer poems in elegiac measure; nor does the tragic writer produce comedies, or the prose-writer poetry of any kind, in the best period, if we except the genial jack-

of-all-trades Ion. Aristotle, indeed, achieved an ode to "Virtue" or "Excellence," but it is very mechanical poetry, and one wonders if it was merely chance that led Professor Smyth, in his edition of the Greek Melic Poets, to print immediately after Aristotle's ode a brief fragment of unknown origin, which says: "The gifts of the Muses are to be won by hard struggle; they lie not before us, for the first comer to carry off." No less than thirty-three epigrams, some of them very beautiful, are ascribed to Plato, but the evidence is all against his authorship of them, though Mackail has accepted some half dozen of them as genuine.

Elegiac and iambic poetry play so important a rôle in Greek civilization during more than two centuries as to demand a somewhat fuller examination at this point. We must remember that prose, as an artistic literary product, is distinctly of late date in Greek literary history. Before 450 B.C. there was no such thing as prose put together according to definite principles of style. The two great literary achievements of the fifth century were the marvelous development of the drama and the creation of a serviceable prose style. But after the decay of the epic, which we may roughly say to have begun about 700, follow two centuries crowded with momentous happenings in the Greek world. They form the period of transition from older forms of political society, intensely aristocratic in character, to democratic states, through the middle stage of tyrannies or petty despotisms; and the period of colonization, when city after city of the Aegean circuit, crowded and turbulent at home and in many cases hard pressed by the growing empires of Asia, sent out bands of its own people to plant the seed of civilization in distant Mediterranean or Euxine lands. Under such conditions the exclusive privileges of a ruling class were quickly curtailed; the man of ability and enterprise, of "push," found his opportunity. He found it through the influence which he could exert upon

his fellow-men, and that depended largely upon his power of speech. The art of writing, though of course constantly practised, was still used chiefly for commercial and official purposes. The number of copies in circulation of any poem must have been extremely small, and even these were as a rule read aloud or used as aids to memorizing for recitation.

These conditions necessitated the development of a style easily memorized and understood. The vast popularity of the epic poetry and the general intelligibility of the artificial language in which it was composed gave not only a suggestion of the kind of literary medium to be employed, but also the material out of which it might be fashioned. The new form of verse thus produced, the elegiac distich, was at once singularly flexible and forcible. So well did it fulfil its purpose that for at least two hundred years it continued to be the chief medium of formal communication of ideas. It was in effect the prose of Greek literature down to the fifth century, and the vehicle of expression for one phase after another of intellectual activity. The patriotic exhortations of Tyrtaeus, the plaintive sentimentality of the love-sick Mimnermus, many of the stirring political manifestos of Solon, the bold ethical and philosophical innovations of Xenophanes, and much else of very diverse character—all these found in the elegiac measure an effective medium of expression. It gained a practical monopoly in the field of terse and pithy utterance, in particular serving for the composition of "epigrams" of every kind; it maintained itself in undiminished popularity into the latest period of Greek literature, and met no less successfully the needs of Latin poetry.

This elegiac verse came from above, from the hallowed and dignified hexameter verse of the epic. Not so the second variety of monodic lyric, the iambic and its congeners the trochaic and trochaic-dactylic verse, the development of

all of which runs parallel with that of the elegy. In the very beginning of the post-epic period, let us say about 660 B.C., a flaming meteor appears in the literary sky: Archilochus of Paros. Of mixed descent, partly noble and partly of exceedingly humble birth; a soldier of fortune, intensely passionate of temper, with an extreme frankness of self-revelation and unfailing sense of literary form, commanding a vocabulary of the greatest variety, he is known to us through fragments of a power and beauty that reveal him as an artist of the first rank. Of all the Greek voices that we hear as one hears a distant singer in the night, when brief snatches of melody come we know not whence, no tones are more thrilling than those of Archilochus. The fragments show us as though by brief lightning flashes the ups and downs of the turbulent life of the man-at-arms who was unlucky in love and apparently none too fortunate in anything else. The episode of his final rejection by Neobule, daughter of a well-to-do Parian, who had at first encouraged his suit, became one of the most famous in literary history, even if we need not believe that his beloved was goaded to suicide by the fierce iambics which the discarded suitor launched at her. The most beautiful as well as the bitterest verses of Archilochus that we have refer to this experience; "it is the first time in Greek literature — perhaps in the literature of the world — that the whole gamut of such emotions finds literary expression," says Crusius. Archilochus used the elegiac verse in many poems, some of them of great dignity, as, for instance, the restrained lament for some friends lost at sea, coupled with an exhortation to courage and endurance under adversity. But his real strength must have lain in his iambic and trochaic verses, which show an extraordinary variety of metrical treatment. The forms are evidently elaborations, worked out with the greatest care and exactness, with unerring adroitness and skill, of popular types of verse which may have been in use for generations before

his time. One of the best is the exhortation to his own soul in time of distress: —

Soul, my soul, with troubles hopeless sore distressed, lift up thy head!
Boldly fronting them that hate thee, have of ambushed foe no dread.
Boast not in the time of triumph; beaten, sink not in distress,
House-bound, prostrate and lamenting; take thy joy of happiness;
Grieve at griefs; yet all in measure; ever keep before thy mind
What a tide of changes, chances, whirls about our human kind!

In 1898, among some papyri now in Strassburg, were found two scraps of a MS. written probably eight hundred years after Archilochus. The larger, only a few inches square, contains fourteen fairly legible lines of poetry, the smaller ten, both in a metre which occurs among the fragments of Archilochus. The language, too, and the exceedingly polished versification, remind us of him, and it is highly probable that this chance find has restored to us two more specimens of his verse. Only the longer one need be discussed here. It breathes the fervent wish that misfortune may befall some one (not to be identified from the fragment); that he may be shipwrecked on the coast of Thrace at Salmydessus, a particularly dangerous and savage part of the Euxine. The lines, omitting the first few words of the fragment, which form the end of a sentence, run as follows: —

At Salmydessus may the wild-haired Thracians give to him a joyous welcome — how his cup of woe shall be full as he eats the bread of slavery! — to him naked and stiff with the cold; and may abundant seaweed, cast out of the surge, hold him fast; may his teeth chatter as he lies dog-like on his face in helplessness, on the shore's edge, close to the waves. Such a sight may I see, for that he has wronged me and trampled under foot his oaths — he that aforetime was my friend!

We may well imagine Archilochus paying his compliments in this fashion to Lycambes, father of his beloved

Neobule. The savage Tenth Epode of Horace is very likely to have been modelled on this poem — another possible indication of the authorship of the Greek fragment. Whoever the object of the poet's wrath may be, shipwreck is wished for him, but not death, rather a fate far worse — slavery among the barbarous Thracians; whereas Horace prays for a violent death for Mevius, and promises thank-offerings if this comes about.

To turn Greek iambics and trochaics into the same metres in English is humanly possible without great loss of the rhythmic effect; but to do this with the more strictly lyric measures, or even dactylic hexameters or elegiac verse, is practically impossible, because the phonetic quality of the two languages is so different. Swinburne in his imitations of Sappho has wrung much of the harshness out of our own speech, and come nearer to the letter as well as the spirit of the original; but every verse is a labored *tour de force*, and as unnatural in English as such smoothness is natural to the Greek. No language of Germanic type in the stage of development which it has nowadays reached is metrically or musically phonetic in the way in which ancient Greek must have been. The proportion of vowels was much greater in Greek, their "color" much clearer, the metrical value, that is, the time-value, of syllables much more accurately developed. Italian verse makes an impression upon the ear which seems to me likely to reproduce many more characteristics of ancient Greek verse than English poetry can imaginably do. French is better than English in this respect, but German, with the power and grace of the elephant, is generally worse. It is most instructive to take up such a collection of fragments as Wharton's edition of Sappho, where, besides the literal translation of each one, we find metrical versions of some of the most famous. In every case, one may say, the renderings are "padded" to make them even approximate the measures of the Greek. But for that matter,

who has ever quite succeeded with Heine's *Du bist wie eine Blume* — the simplest piece of verse imaginable? In fact, the simpler, the more direct, the original, the worse for the translator. *Traduttore traditore.*[1]

In his metrical achievements no less than in the tone of his satire and invective, Archilochus is the direct ancestor of Attic comedy; and he proved an inexhaustible mine to the Roman poets, who drew from him the metrical models which they reproduced with such astonishing fidelity, in a language by no means closely like the Greek in metrical character. The Greek that Archilochus heard spoken around him every day was already largely shaped to poetical use; but the Latin spoken in the streets of Rome must have contained relatively few cadences that inspired Horace to immortalize them in the numbers of his great predecessor.

Before passing to the third division of the individual lyric, the poetry of Alcaeus, Sappho, and Anacreon, which forms at the same time the first division of what we have agreed to call the "melic" poetry, we should glance at a particularly interesting variety of the lyric, one which includes not only many poems of elegiac and iambic type, but also, probably, most of those of Alcaeus and Anacreon, and some that have been generally classed with the choral lyric. I refer to the *sympotic* poetry, including the *Skolia* — poems composed to be sung at feasts or in many cases composed extemporaneously at such gatherings. At the symposia of the political or religious clubs that were so common in Greece, frequent opportunity was given for the delivery of verses, with musical accompaniment; at the better sort of such parties the guests were expected to entertain themselves in this intelligent fashion. A banquet of this kind, at which the

[1] Professor Gilbert Murray's exquisite metrical translations of Euripides do not disprove my contention, for they are very free *Nachdichtungen*, in which even the imagery of the original is sometimes replaced by figures of quite different character.

entertainment consists of a series of glorifications of Eros (but in prose, not in verse), is described for us in Plato's *Symposium*. Probably many of Archilochus's poems were composed for such occasions; a very beautiful bit of verse by Xenophanes describes an ideal supper-party of reasonable men; and there are many others.

One of the literary puzzles connected with ancient Greece is a collection of nearly fourteen hundred elegiac verses attached to the name of Theognis of Megara. The personality of this poet is a matter of great obscurity; most probably he lived till somewhat after 500. The researches into his life and poems have yielded their best results in the by-products, so to speak, of the process — in the increased knowledge we have gained of the many-sidedness and richness of this sympotic poetry. The collection is most heterogeneous; many lines which occur in quotations from other poets cannot have been composed by Theognis at all; and it is often impossible to determine what should be assigned to him. Scholars are divided as to whether the collection was made for didactic purposes or to serve as a kind of song-book at symposia. While the latter is more probable as a whole, it must be admitted that some details of the arrangement point to a didactic object. There is a great deal of *Lebensweisheit*, proverbial philosophy of a kind always popular among the Greeks; some very graceful and charming toasts; endless complaints that the world is going to the dogs, now that the old aristocracy is crowded to the wall and political upstarts and the newly rich have gained the upper hand; and some curious bits of very personal verse addressed to undesirable companions at the party, one of which (595–598) may be quoted here: —

> Comrades we'll be, dear Sir, but at a distance;
> (Of all but wealth one may have quite too much!)
> Be friends, perhaps, for long; but your assistance
> Pray give to those who understand your touch.

A beautiful Greek legend of Orpheus, the mythical bard of Thrace, says that when he was slain by Thracian women in their frenzy and torn in pieces, and the fragments of his body thrown into the sea, the head, floating upon the waves, was carried southward to Lesbos, and there cast upon the shore.

The legend is but a poetic statement of the fact that in Lesbos, at an early period of its history, arose a school of poetry that produced works worthy to be called inspired. And in truth the sudden efflorescence of genius in that somewhat remote island must have seemed not unmiraculous to the Greeks of later times, particularly when contrasted with the complete eclipse which it soon afterward suffered. Terpander, a native of Lesbos, is said to have gone to Sparta and established there a school of music and poetry, early in the seventh century B.C. At the end of the same century the island seems to have contained some of the most flourishing of Greek communities, Mitylene, Methymna, and Eresus. It was unusually favored by nature, its scenery and climate having few rivals in any part of the Greek world. A high degree of luxury prevailed, but this was tempered by an artistic sense and a passion for the beautiful of an intensity that have hardly been known elsewhere. The people of Lesbos were of Aeolian stock, high-strung, quick-tempered, intense alike in love and in hate. Political passion ran high, and one murderous feud succeeded another with startling rapidity, in which Pittacus, who achieved the honor of inclusion among the "Seven Wise Men," played a leading part. In these turbulent surroundings was developed an art of music and poetry of such excellence as to give rise to various proverbs: "after the Lesbian singer," because at Sparta the members of the school of Terpander had the honor of singing first in musical contests; and one which Sappho embodied in her line

Eminent as the Lesbian bard among strangers,

which may have referred to Terpander himself.

The two great lights of Lesbian poetry, Alcaeus and Sappho, rose not far apart, about the end of the seventh century. Dates cannot be set with exactness, but doubtless both lived well beyond 600. One cannot say which was the elder, nor does it much matter. Of course they were brought into fancied relationship by later writers, even before the time of Aristotle, and even recently, more's the pity, by Mr. Percy Mackaye. Alcaeus is revealed to us by the fragments as most intimately concerned in the agitated life of his native town; they bear out as well the statement of Athenaeus that he was a valiant fighter, a mighty drinker, and an ardent lover.

To Alcaeus and Sappho are reasonably ascribed the elaboration of the numerous rhythms represented in the fragments of their poems, rhythms undoubtedly based upon forms already popular, which under the magic of their touch took on new life and beauty. We cannot, however, say with certainty what particular schemes we owe to each of them; it is even doubtful whether the stanzas called Alcaic and Sapphic are inventions of Alcaeus and Sappho respectively. Most of the relics of Alcaeus are explainable as sympotic poems; the social gatherings of men gave occasion alike for political, for erotic, and for purely convivial verse. To him we owe the earliest known comparison of the state with a ship; perhaps no conceit has lasted longer in literature. In a fragment noted for its power and vividness he describes the vessel laboring in a heavy sea, amid the strife of winds that buffet her on this side and on that, and the waves that threaten every moment to swamp the already water-logged vessel. To any one that has spent a boisterous night on the Aegean the details of the poem, the bilge-water splashing about the mast, the rent and flapping sail, the thrashing halliards, call up an exceedingly vivid picture; and no Greek who had gone very far from his own door could fail to realize all the details. When a Greek poet sings of the sea and

ships, he knows what he is talking about, and that his hearers will know he knows.

Alcaeus's feeling for nature, like that of all Greek poets, is very keen. His descriptions are brief, directly and forcibly characteristic. In bitterness against his enemies he almost equals Archilochus. Indeed, it is hard to believe that the Parian did not strongly influence the Lesbian, who was in so many ways a kindred spirit. Yet the metrical preferences of the two are very different. The long choriambic verses of Alcaeus remind us of nothing in Archilochus, though he, too, employs long verses. The Lesbian is much more distinctly musical. One can *recite* Archilochus's verses without feeling that it is a foolish performance; not so with those of Alcaeus or of Sappho, which must be sung if their metrical structure is to be clearly revealed. One of the best pieces of Alcaeus is the description of his armory. The long, swinging verses are beautifully expressive of the warrior-poet's pride in his weapons and armor, kept bright and ready against the day of use — and may it soon come!

A story is told by Pliny and others of the Greek painter Timanthes and his famous picture of the sacrifice of Iphigeneia, in which the artist depicted with great skill and a subtle sense of proportion the various degrees of emotion felt by the participants in that horrid rite, but recoiled before the task of portraying the feelings of Agamemnon, whom he represented with veiled face. The lecturer who faces the problem of adequately characterizing Sappho must find himself somewhat similarly embarrassed, but unable to save himself as Timanthes in the foolish story is made to do. His way is placarded with warnings. "All criticism of Sappho," says Professor Shorey in a recent review of Mackail's *Lectures on Greek Poetry*, "is the endeavor to impart to those who cannot read Greek an ecstasy which they cannot feel." And Professor Mackail himself says: "All praise of her poetry tends to become ecstatic and hyper-

bolical; but these are just the epithets that can never be applied to her poetry itself. Most attempts that have been made to reproduce it or to communicate its quality force the note: her own note is never forced."

No writer of antiquity has been so often alternately raised on a lofty pedestal and dragged in the mire. This, however, only with reference to her life; concerning the transcendent beauty of her poetry there has been but one voice, and those critics who had before them the most complete collections of her poems, the ancients, are loudest in her praise. "She surpasses all other women in poetry as far as Homer surpasses all men"; "she is the tenth Muse"; and so on through endless repetitions and modifications of admiration.

Singularly little is really known of her life, or was known to her countrymen in succeeding centuries, to judge by the romantic tales about her that were current in ancient times. She seems to have maintained a school of music and poetry for young women; her own house she calls a μοισοπόλος οἰκία, "a dwelling frequented by the Muses." She may well have been the head of a kind of religious community devoted to the cult of Aphrodite, who is often invoked in her poems. We know from inscriptions that there was such a θίασος (as associations of that kind were called) of Aphrodite at Paros, open only to women; and we have testimony of a form of cult in Lesbos from which women were strictly excluded, which would thus have formed the exact counterpart of such a θίασος as I have imagined for Sappho. Apparently she was driven from Lesbos by political upheavals, and spent many years abroad. But there is no fragment of her poetry that cannot be referred quite naturally to the conditions of life within the circle of her pupils and friends. Many of the most beautiful come from wedding-songs, which Sappho doubtless wrote for her pupils when they left her school to be married. The dominant note of her poetry is love, and the affection of kindred and friends; and never

have these emotions found more exquisite utterance. The range of thought is not wide, but within the compass of individual emotion there is great variety, and everywhere the deepest sincerity and the most earnest intensity.

Intensity and directness, in fact, are the two great characteristics of her poetry. "Would it were possible," says an old Attic drinking-song, "to open the breast of every one and look in at his heart, to see what manner of man he is." Sappho has opened her own heart for us; and we may say, without ecstasy or hyperbole or affectation, that it is a sanctuary. "Pure must he be," we read in an extract from an anonymous writer quoted by Clement of Alexandria, "who enters a temple that is fragrant with incense; for purity is the thinking of holy things." No temple has been oftener polluted by the touch of unclean hands, by the unseemly jest, by the name of the vulgar tourist scribbled on the columns of dazzling marble, than the sanctuary of Sappho's own personality. I have heard it said by a profound student and unusually skilful and sympathetic interpreter of music that only those persons can properly judge of the delicate and subtle beauty of the clavichord who play it for themselves. Something like that seems to me to be true of Sappho's poetry, except that it is comparable rather to the violoncello, with its tones of incomparable richness and softness. If it seems an unfeeling "counsel of perfection" to say to those who would learn to know Sappho as well as the lapse of twenty-five hundred years will permit: "Learn Greek, or it is a hopeless task" — there is after all nothing else to say. But it may be comforting to some who would know Sappho, yet cannot learn Greek, to be told that perhaps very few of those who have learned it have really made her acquaintance.

† Six poets of the "canonical nine" of the Alexandrians belong to the class of choral lyrists: Alcman, Stesichorus,

Ibycus, Simonides, Pindar, Bacchylides. Only of Pindar and of Bacchylides have we complete poems remaining, and of Pindar only epinician odes in complete form. Among the fragments of Alcman is the one mentioned above, of about 140 lines, our only specimen of a Partheneion; of Stesichorus and Ibycus there is very little left; of Simonides we have a great number of fragments, but more than half of these are in the elegiac distich, and the longest melic fragment is only of twenty-two lines.

The choral lyric as a whole bears the stamp of Dorian manners, of sedate and tranquil beauty. Dignified measures prevail, though Pindar shows great fondness for certain agitated rhythms in $\frac{5}{8}$ time, the despair of most modern metricians. The language is mainly Doric, but greatly tempered from the vernacular types in local use, and enriched with forms of Aeolic origin, here and there with borrowings from epic diction. But of these six poets not one is known to have been an out-and-out Dorian. Alcman, though his artistic career was confined to Sparta, was born in Sardis, perhaps of Dorian stock; Stesichorus of Himera in Sicily and Ibycus of Rhegium in Italy may have been, for all we know, of very mixed parentage, as the population of both these towns is known to have been; Pindar was a Boeotian; and Simonides and Bacchylides were thorough Ionians.

The loss of the music to which the choral lyrics were sung has been far more serious than in the case of the monodic lyric. The prerequisite of melody is tone, which cannot be produced without the three essentials of pitch, duration, and intensity. But a single tone is not melody, which appears only when tone is modified by variations in one or more of the three elements that compose it. Despite the discovery of a few inscribed stones bearing the text of hymns with simple designation of the notes, we still know very little of the details of Greek music. The text of a poem of Pindar, for example, gives us no indication of the pitch-element or the stress-

element of the melody; it does give us some indication of the time-element, of the rhythm, by the known "quantity" of the syllables, *i.e.* the relative time taken for the utterance of each one. But there is no indication of the length of the rests, which we have to figure out for ourselves; and there is great disagreement among metricians on this score. We have no specimen of notation of purely instrumental music from classical times; and if ancient writers on metre had not handed down the doctrine of long and short syllables, we could find in the texts no certain indications of the rhythm, which was quantitative and had nothing to do with the system of written accents that was introduced later. It is because the rhythms of choral poetry (which was in most, if not all, cases performed with a sort of dance or even pantomime) are vastly more elaborate than those of the monodic lyric, that the loss of the melodies has left us more in the dark concerning the actual effect of the pieces when executed. A favorite plan of composition was the "strophic" or "triadic." In this the greater metrical divisions of the poem were arranged in groups of three elements, the first two, called strophe and antistrophe, corresponding exactly in musical structure, the third differing from them. Any number of such triads might be combined to make up the whole poem. Pindar affords some of the briefest and of the most elaborate examples, ranging from one triad to a splendid aggregation of thirteen. It is noteworthy that no two choral compositions of Pindar and the three tragic poets that have survived show identical metrical structure.

This form of composition appears to have been the invention of Alcman, who may be dated approximately as a contemporary of Archilochus. The Sparta of his day was very different from that of several centuries later. It was the headquarters of choral music and dancing, the Mecca of poets and musicians from all parts of the Greek-speaking world. Alcman, though a foreigner, identified himself

completely with Spartan life. He used in some of his poems an extremer form of local vernacular than is elsewhere found in the choral lyric. They show a singular sweetness and old-fashioned quaintness, a grave and dainty playfulness; in reading them one has at times a sensation as of looking at well-preserved daguerreotypes, with their delicate primness. His fondness for talking of himself makes of him almost a poet of the individual lyric. Many of his poems seem to have been composed to be sung by young girls, and are most charming in their arch simplicity and grace of language and verse. Among the shorter fragments two are particularly beautiful and justly famous. One is of four hexameter verses, wherein the poet, bent with old age, complains to the sweet-voiced maidens that his limbs can no longer support him: —

> Would, ah! would I were a halcyon that flies with the birds of his flock over the foaming waves, with fearless heart, that sea-purple bird of the spring.

The point of the verses lies in the allusion to a legend that the male halcyon, when old and no longer able to fly, is carried by his mates over sea to his resting-place. Perhaps it is not too fanciful to imagine that Alcman longs to be transported by his faithful singers across the sea to be buried in his native Sardis. If that was his wish, it was not carried out, for Pausanias saw his grave at Sparta. The other fragment is a singularly beautiful description of the sleep of nature: —

> Asleep are the summits and the crags of the mountains, the headlands and ravines, and all the creeping things that the dark earth nourishes, the mountain-ranging beasts and the race of bees, the monsters in the depths of the purple sea, asleep the tribes of long-winged birds.

No English words can reproduce the smoothness and liquid beauty of the Greek. Thomas Campbell, in his well-known

translation, while avoiding for the most part the danger of "padding," is guilty of such a sputtering line as this: —

Its monsters rest, whilst wrapped in bower and spray.

Goethe's "Ueber allen Gipfeln ist Ruh," is inevitably compared, and there is a good deal of sputtering in that, beautiful as it is. We know it mostly in connection with Schubert's exquisite music, which greatly enhances its beauty. If we only had Alcman's music too! — which, however, we might find much too simple for our polyphonic taste.

Stesichorus and Ibycus have left us but little by which their literary qualities can be judged. The former was immensely popular for many generations. He is said to have made the Homeric legends more familiar to the Western Greeks, in Italy and Sicily, and to have worked them over on a grand scale for use in his choral songs. Probably the subjects, more than the mode of treatment, which seems to have been of what we should call a romantic type, assured the lasting performance and circulation of his works. We know that his influence was felt and his poems used as school texts in Roman times.

Ibycus, perhaps best known to moderns from the legend of the cranes who betrayed his murderers, which was utilized by Schiller for his famous poem, was the passionate poet of love, unique in adding this note to the Dorian song of the chorus. As far as we can judge from the few fragments, his language was intense and highly colored, his figures vivid, and his versification at once sonorous and agitated.

The caprice of fate is nowhere better illustrated than by the case of Simonides. An Ionian by birth, he seems to have made all of Greece his home by turns, dying at last in far-off Sicily, full of years and of honors. In the anecdotal part of Greek literary history he bulks large. Later writers never weary of telling of his witticisms, and many inventions are ascribed to him, some of which are earlier by one or more

centuries than the time of his birth. Older than Pindar by some thirty years, he was, like him, the friend and companion of the great in all quarters of the Greek world, and many of his jests bear upon such intimacies. When asked if it was better to be wise or rich, he answered: "To be rich, for the wise are to be found at the doors of the rich" — a joke which receives its full explanation only when we remember that the "wise" man is the poet, and the "rich" the prince. Apparently Simonides was a thoroughgoing man of the world, well versed in practical affairs, a welcome and valued counsellor at many courts. His versatility was evidently very great, and his literary production, continued to the last days of his life, not less so. Of the epinician odes, written for victors in the great games, we have but a few scanty fragments that afford no fair means of comparison with Pindar. He was particularly famous for Threnoi, or dirges, and for epitaphs: in some of the fragments of the former, and complete specimens of the latter, the exquisite finish of his art is especially conspicuous. The famous lines referring to Danaë and the infant Perseus tossed about on the sea in the chest in which they had been cast adrift by her father Acrisius, and a brief fragment from an Enkomion on those that fell at Thermopylae, are perhaps the most characteristic that we possess. Their beauty consists rather in the careful and exhaustive elaboration of a single idea, which is cut and polished like a diamond, and set in a bezel of cunningly chased phrase, than in richness of thought or depth of feeling. There is much pathos, but it tends to a sentimentality which is apt to be a little overwrought. But the workmanship of every fragment, every epigram and distich, is flawless. There is an amusing story, told in Athenaeus, that by the richness and variety of his mythological allusions he made life miserable for the poor schoolmasters who had to explain his works. As an example of the elaborateness with which he expresses a single thought, illuminating it from every

side, I choose the fragment of the Enkomion just mentioned: —

> Of them that died at Thermopylae glorious is the fate, and happy the lot, and their tomb has become an altar; in the place of lamentations is recollection, and of mourning praise. Such a winding-sheet neither decay nor all-subduing time shall destroy. This sepulchre of brave men has received as its indweller the glory of Hellas; witness Leonidas, king of Sparta, who has left behind him a mighty glory of valor and everlasting fame.

But no translation can show the variety that is gained in Simonides's diction by subtle changes in the order of words and in the rhythmical phrasing; the polished jewel is held up to the light and turned to and fro that it may catch and reflect every ray of the spectrum.

The greatest glory of the choral lyric, however, shines for us in Pindar, the proud Boeotian who claimed to be the equal of the princes whom he extolled. His poetical career began about 500 B.C., when he was hardly twenty years old, and for more than half a century he remained by the side of his rival Simonides (there was no love lost between them) in the forefront of popular attention, favorite of princes, a sojourner at Syracuse and Agrigentum, eagerly sought for to glorify the achievements of those that won in the great games. Only his epinician odes, composed for such victors, have survived except in fragments, but his activity extended over many fields of poetry, and in splendor of language the fragments equal any parts of the complete poems. It is hard to understand, in view of this, how the epinician poems alone should have received the honor of constant recopying, which has been the means of preserving them for the edification of modern readers.

The custom of celebrating a great athletic victory, generally after the victor's return to his home, with the added splendor of a choral ode composed for the occasion by some noted poet, seems to have been a short-lived fashion. Per-

haps a century was the extent of its prevalence, but in that period it called forth some of the most gorgeous poetry that European literatures have known. Not every victor could expect to secure a Simonides or a Pindar or a Bacchylides to immortalize his achievements, or could afford to make provision for proper performance of the elaborate choral odes, which demanded the services of trained singers. The most splendid of the odes are those written for the great princes of Sicily and Cyrene whose horses had won at Olympia and Delphi; the most elaborate of all, the Fourth Pythian, was composed for Arcesilas of Cyrene in 466, apparently as a commission from a nobleman of Cyrene who had been exiled and was anxious to regain the favor of the king. It is an imposing poem of three hundred long lines, a cantata, which must have taken at least an hour to perform; but it is also, quite apart from its metrical and musical splendor, a literary work of the first rank.

The principle of composition of these grand odes is practically the same throughout. Instead of the obvious and matter-of-fact glorification of the victor to the exclusion of other themes, which would soon become commonplace and tiresome, Pindar adopts a far more artistic and effective plan. Whether it was his own innovation or the invention of Simonides, who preceded him in the composition of such odes, we cannot say, as not one of Simonides's epinicians has come down to us. It is, however, probable that Pindar merely elaborated a custom which he had inherited. A story is told by Cicero, Quintilian, and others, that Simonides wrote an Enkomion for Scopas, a Thessalian prince, in which he had so much to say of Castor and Pollux, and so little of Scopas, that the prince paid him but half the sum agreed upon, telling him to go to the Dioscuri for the rest. After an introduction of general character, Pindar soon turns to an account of the founding of the games, or to some noted event in the legends connected with them, or to the legendary history

of the victor's family, or the past glories of his native city. By far the greater part of every ode — except a few very short ones — is taken up with such a myth or legend, told with all the splendor of gorgeous diction and wealth of imagery that the poet has at his command. The narration of the myth finished, the poet turns to the victor, but even now his praises are sung in relatively restrained language. It is as victor in the greatest, most glorious contests known to man, or as worthy descendant of illustrious, even divine ancestors, or as citizen who brings honor to a state already justly famous, that he is extolled; and throughout Pindar insists upon the indispensable service that he is performing in singing of the achievement, for, as he says in a stray fragment, *θνάσκει σιγαθὲν καλὸν ἔργον*, "the fair deed that is unmentioned dies."

This praise by indirection is characteristic of much of the best Greek work. A noble example of it is the Funeral Oration which Thucydides puts into the mouth of Pericles, purporting to have been delivered at the public funeral ceremonies of those Athenians who had fallen in the first year of the Peloponnesian War. The whole is an encomium of Athens, of her glorious past, her great achievements in war and in peace, her liberal and enlightened constitution; and it is only at the end that with a very swift transition he acclaims the dead as worthy sons of such a state, in whose fame they are to find fame, comforts their surviving kinsmen with the thought of their undying glory, and exhorts these to noble emulation of such bravery and self-sacrificing patriotism.

As an illustration of Pindar's way of working, I should like to give as briefly as possible an abstract of one of the finest of the odes, the Seventh Olympian. It was written in honor of Diagoras of Rhodes, who won in boxing at Olympia in 464 B.C. He belonged to a family famed for its noble ancestry, and besides being the greatest of Greek boxers had

the satisfaction of seeing his sons and grandsons win prize after prize. Rhodes, his fatherland, Dorian to the core, was devoted to the worship of the sun, and the brilliancy of its life was noted throughout Greece. Its coins bore the head of Helios-Apollo, or the rose, symbol of the sun. The whole ode glows with color; but across it there fall three shadows. A blessed outcome, so the poet sings, may follow, by the grace of God, even upon transgression. So famous did the ode become, according to an ancient commentator, that it was written in letters of gold and preserved in the temple of Athena at Lindos. The poem begins with a striking comparison: "As when in wealthy hand one lifts a cup, bubbling within with the dew of the vine, and gives it to the young spouse of his daughter, pledging his health, a gift from home to home, best of his golden treasures, bringing honor to the joyous feast and to the alliance, and among the friends that sit by makes him to be envied for the wedlock of souls; so I, bringing a draught of nectar, gift of the Muses, sweet fruit of my mind, do homage unto victors at Olympia and Pytho." Then the poet turns rapidly to his main theme, the praise of Rhodes. This is handled with great adroitness; three instances of wrong-doing (from the legendary history of the island), are introduced, in reverse chronological order, each one of which led, nevertheless, to a happy result. Tlepolemus in sudden passion slew his mother's brother. In expiation of the deed he was bidden by the oracle to lead forth a colony to Rhodes. It was upon Rhodes that Zeus sent down a shower of gold, at the time of Athene's birth. This serves as transition to the next earlier stage. The sun, as the god that sees all things, beheld the birth of Athene, and bade his children in Rhodes be the first to worship the new goddess. They went up to the citadel to offer sacrifice, but forgot the fire, and so were forced to sacrifice with fireless rites. Yet Zeus forgave them this and rained down gold upon their land. Then Pindar goes back

to the earliest period of all. How did Helios and his children come into possession of Rhodes? When Zeus divided up the earth among the gods, Rhodes still lay beneath the surface of the sea. Helios failed to come to the allotment, and was left portionless. Zeus offered to redivide the earth, but Helios stopped him, for he saw at that moment the island rising from the sea, and took it as his portion; and it remained as a heritage to his children. For Tlepolemus, who led the men of Tiryns to this lordly island, was ordained the honor of sacrifice and of games. At these home games Diagoras won great renown, yes, and at Isthmia and at Nemea, too, and at Athens and elsewhere, and now at Olympia. The ode ends with a prayer to Zeus for the future welfare of Diagoras, "who walks in the straight way that abhors all insolence."

No description can give an idea of the magnificence of Pindar's diction; it fairly glows with color, like a great cathedral window filled with rich but harmonious stained glass. But it is not garish or tawdry splendor; and it is never commonplace or vulgar. Not only in the great epinician odes are Pindar's powers manifest. In some of the shortest the same qualities appear, as in the Fourteenth Olympian, composed in honor of a Boeotian boy, Asopichus of Orchomenus, an ancient seat of the worship of the Graces. The poem is of only twenty-four lines, but the structure is massive in the extreme. The first twelve lines are taken up with an eloquent praise of the Graces and the great part that their inspiration has played in the civilization of men. In the second half the Graces are invoked by name, and besought to be propitious, now that a scion of their beloved city is an Olympic victor. Then, unexpectedly but most effectively, the poet turns to Echo, who is besought to enter the dark-walled dwelling of Persephone, queen of the dead, and to seek out the boy's father, that he may learn how his son has crowned his youthful locks at glorious Olympia with

the wreath of triumph. And many of the fragments from poems of other classes are worthy mates of any passages that the odes of victory can produce. Perhaps the most famous of the fragments is that from the dithyramb in honor of Athens: —

O shining and violet-crowned illustrious Athens, full of song, bulwark of Hellas, citadel divine!

Many modern readers recoil from Pindar, and the indiscriminate praise of former times has given place to a no less uncritical depreciation. This is due, perhaps, partly to the waning popularity of poetry, partly to a feeling that there is some incongruity between the magniloquent grandeur of the treatment and the relative unimportance of the theme (as it appears to many literal-minded moderns), and partly, too, because one is apt to read too much at once. The odes are strong, rich meat, highly seasoned, and not for mental dyspeptics, or for a class whom Professor Gildersleeve rather tartly calls "devotees of the great goddess Anaemia."

Of Bacchylides, last and perhaps least of the nine poets of the Canon, we happen nowadays to know more than was known during the fifteen hundred years that ended with the last century. The nephew of Simonides, he seems to have learned much from him in the way of poetical composition, above all a marvelous facility and smooth melodiousness of style, for all the world like the music of Mendelssohn. The discovery of the papyrus MS. to which reference was made above restored to us not only many of his epinician odes, but also two poems of a class hitherto unexemplified among the relics of Greek poetry. One of these describes in a very breezy and delightful fashion the defiance shown by Theseus to King Minos of Crete on the voyage from Athens to Cnossus, and the astonishing adventures of Theseus when in response to the taunt of Minos he leaped overboard after the ring which the king had cast into the sea. The poem

gives literary illustration and explanation to several well-known works of Greek art.

With Bacchylides the real history of Greek lyric poetry comes to an end, except for the dithyramb, which entered upon a new career of popularity, becoming, in fact, a sort of ancient oratorio. The new fragment of the *Persians* of Timotheus reveals an unexpected stage of turgid frothiness which contrasts very painfully with the severe beauty of the earlier lyric.

It is a long and devious way on which I have led my hearers through the mass of ruins with which this ancient sanctuary of the Muses is thickly strewn. Here and there a noble building still stands nearly intact, but the most of our journey has shown us only broken capitals, bits of architectural ornament, fragments of sculpture, of exquisite workmanship, it is true, but unrelated and heaped up in hopeless confusion. Is it possible to discover a logical connection between these myriad relics, to bring them into any clear relation to a constructive principle, or to trace their influence upon generations following those that produced them?

The chief element that they have in common, not only, in fact, with each other, but with all the best Greek work, is that of direct practical applicability to the end in view. The form is closely conditioned by the content. The letter is not at war with the spirit; it does not kill, but draws life from the spirit and becomes its best ally. It is straightforward, honest expression that we find for the most part, harmonious and graceful because the language was harmonious and graceful.

The Greek was generally free from affectation and cant. He often made the mistake, due to his ruling passion for order and system, of assuming that what was beautiful to the eye was also morally good; but he was saved from the still cruder mistake of assuming that external beauty must con-

ceal some moral defect. There is a profound truth underlying the legend of Helen: the truth that beauty is not skin-deep. But the Greek distinguished very clearly between beauty and prettiness. The outlines of his spiritual landscape, as of his natural landscape, were exceedingly firm and severe. And he felt himself as a human being, no more and no less, and was prepared to take the consequences.

Edward Delavan Perry.

TRAGEDY

The Greek tragic poets were earnest students of the problems and mysteries of human life. Man's relation to the universe about him, his obligations to the unseen powers which control the universe, his duties to his fellow-beings, the seeming conflicts between human and divine law, all these form the material of Greek tragedy. The wide range of the subject naturally makes it a difficult one to discuss satisfactorily in a single lecture, and to separate those features of it which are essential and universal from those which are less so is not an easy matter. It seems necessary at the outset to put aside questions which may be called historical and which have to do with the origin of Greek Tragedy and with the traditional elements in its component parts. To trace the growth of this form of poetry from its beginnings, such as may perhaps be witnessed to-day in certain very primitive Greek communities,[1] and to understand its close relation to the epic and lyric poetry which preceded it, and then to note how the dramatic element forces that which is mainly lyric into a more and more subordinate position — these are indeed matters of moment to one who would understand the true character of Greek Tragedy. It is, however, not tragedy in its becoming which concerns us now, but in its completeness, as the three great Attic masters of the fifth century B.C. produced it. I would also avoid discussion of the vexed question of the stage and of similar matters, for, as Aristotle says,[2] the power of tragedy

[1] Cf. *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, XXVI, pp. 191 ff.
[2] *Poetics*, VI, § 19, XIV, §§ 1, 2.

should be felt apart from representation and actors. Thus the main consideration is to get at an estimate of Greek Tragedy which shall indicate whether it possesses the essential qualities of really great poetry. If a person has read much of such poetry in any language, he comes to know its accent and thus gradually to form a standard by which he may test his impressions. To attempt to define it is generally unprofitable, but one may predicate certain of its essential qualities without fear of contradiction. The poet must in the first place draw his inspiration immediately from the life and the world about him; for if he is inspired mainly by other poets, his thoughts and his pictures may indeed be beautiful, but they will after all be like the shadows of real objects which the men see in Plato's description of the cave.[1] This perhaps is self-evident, even though, with senses soothed by the beauty of sound and rhythmic movement, we now and then forget the truth, until it is brought home to us by some simple lyric which has not lost the tone of pure folk-poetry, like the best lyrics of Burns or some of Heine's, or a graphic line of Theocritus, or like one of those wonderful phrases of Sappho, resplendent with human passion and rich in human sympathy. There is another quality also which the best poetry will certainly have, that which enables it to make its appeal unconfined by bounds of nationality and language — the quality of universality. And it is naturally only the greatest poets who attain to this, for to do so implies a mind which can read in its individual experience the experience of humanity, and which instinctively understands how to separate the adventitious from the permanent and essential. This is the quality one feels when startled by the penetrating truth and wisdom of some of Shakespeare's lines, uttered with an ease which seems thoughtless; and a like power, with like magic of phrase, is found in Sophocles. Thus one may without ques-

[1] *Republic*, VII, *init.*

tion accept Arnold's oft-quoted dictum that the noble and profound application of ideas to life is the most essential part of poetic greatness. To understand then the life and thought which has surrounded a great poet is of the highest importance, if we seek to understand his poetry; and if the age in which he lived shows tendencies in its spiritual life which seem typical of the movements and changes in the intellectual history of mankind, we shall expect to find that a great poet in such a time will so interpret these tendencies as to make his work typical of the thought of humanity.

Let us therefore briefly consider what the leading characteristics were of the age during which the three great tragic poets, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, lived — the period, say, from about 525 to about 400 B.C. It is preeminently the Attic period of Greek intellectual life, but the elements which entered into it were the contributions of many parts of the Greek world. Ionian epic, lyric, and elegiac poetry, Ionian philosophical speculation, the Dorian choral lyric, and the Aeolian lyric of Lesbos all made themselves felt in the Athens of the sixth century B.C. The stimulus also of Ionian plastic and graphic art was marked at this time, and it penetrated deeply into the ideas of the common people, as may be seen in the industrial work of the period. Nor was the stirring atmosphere of political struggle lacking. The Athenians were strongly affected by the rising tide of democracy which was spreading through the Greek world, and early in the sixth century, as the Solonian legislation shows, the pressure for social change became intense through economic stress. There followed years of sharp struggle between the growing democracy and the house of Pisistratus — in many ways an enlightened dynasty — until toward the close of the century, under the constitution of Cleisthenes, a sure foundation was laid for the popular power that was to develop during the next century. Of the religious influences during this sixth century we know little in detail, but

it is certain that the Homeric and Hesiodic theologies were being purified and spiritualized, and it is likely that the pantheism and the eschatology of the Orphic teaching was beginning to have the effect which is evident in many writings of a later day.

Hardly had the young Athenian state become securely established when it was called upon to lead in the struggles of the Persian Wars, and from these it came forth with national consciousness strengthened by suffering. The time of stress had brought to the front a number of very able men as leaders in the constitutional development which followed. Up to the time of the death of Pericles in 429 B.C., high ability in the management of affairs is conspicuous. It made possible the establishment of the Athenian naval supremacy and the confederation of allies which was dependent on this, and it held in check the excesses of the undisciplined democracy. The period of about fifty years after the Persian Wars was thus one of prosperity, high hope, and patriotic enthusiasm. Athens became the intellectual centre of Greece, and the rapid progress which took place in the development of literature and art shows how well the men of the previous century had laid the foundations. The drama passed out of its early period of crudity and became the most distinctive form of poetry, exerting a strong influence on men's thoughts in many walks of life. History, too, in the hands of Herodotus and Thucydides lost its genealogical and annalistic character and developed into a real form of literature. Oratory began, stimulated by a widespread interest in rhetoric and steadied in its growth by the debates of the public assemblies and of the law-courts. Philosophic speculation, too, was most active. The dark but pregnant thought of Heraclitus, continuing and far surpassing in its range the speculations of the early Ionic philosophers, entered deeply into the intellectual life. Out of the now matured colonies of Magna Graecia there flowed back

upon the mother-country the differing stream of Eleatic philosophic thought, and this, too, was a strong and stimulating influence. In still more immediate contact with many of the leading minds of Athens was the inspiring teaching of Anaxagoras; and it would seem that the theories of the Atomic philosophers must have added to thought something of the same elements that have come to us through the present era of scientific discovery. Such an atmosphere naturally created a great demand for higher education, and to meet this certain of the so-called sophists established themselves in Athens. Their teaching may have been in some ways superficial, but it was calculated to provoke discussion and often dissent, and thus to increase the ferment in the minds of men. The powerful influence of Socrates also was felt in the second half of this fifth century, and his searching analysis, with its inductive reasoning and general definition, was applied to the many problems, still little thought out, which were in the air.

This same century was quite as remarkable on the side of painting, sculpture, and architecture. The frescoes of Polygnotus and his school, the sculptures of the Phidian circle of artists, and the splendid Doric and Ionic architecture, of which we still have the ruins, played a brilliant part in the general intellectual activity. Nor was the influence of vigorous trade wanting. The Piraeus became a busy mart which attracted merchants and manufacturers, and many brought with them the liberalizing influence of contact with a larger world.[1] As is natural, the literature indicates on every hand that the serious questions of religion were in men's thoughts. The older conceptions of the gods had become inadequate, and we see them rejected in one way or another by different minds. Euripides is above all others the poet in whom this spirit of revolt appears, and with the

[1] Cf. Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, vs. 1043, for a remark which shows that the society of the poet's day knew *nouveaux riches*.

fading away of the old beliefs, he finds an outlet for his religious emotions in the life immediately about him, through deep sympathy with human suffering. How typical of the processes of human spiritual growth all this seems! How like some of the changes in thought among ourselves during the last fifty or sixty years! There was, however, one peculiarity of the conditions at Athens which must have tended greatly to increase the inspiration felt by the higher minds. This point is well put by Professor Gilbert Murray, whom I quote. "There was a circumstance that has rarely been repeated in history — the fact that all the different advances appeared to help one another. The ideals of freedom, law, and progress; of truth and beauty, of knowledge and virtue, of humanity and religion; high things, the conflicts between which have caused most of the disruptions and despondencies of human societies, seemed for a generation or two at this time to lie all in the same direction."[1] This is the spirit of Periclean Athens, before it had been in a measure crushed by the evil spirit of the Peloponnesian War. It shines forth in the noble speeches which Thucydides puts into the mouth of Pericles, it appears in the Athenian ideals as Herodotus pictures them, and it is constantly illustrated in the patriotic utterances of the three great tragedians. Plainly the popular mood was one of enthusiasm and high hope, such as might well have inspired the great chorus in the *Antigone* of Sophocles (vv. 332 ff.) on man's power over nature. With this spirit Sir Richard Jebb[2] suggests a comparison of Milton's enthusiastic words in which after the battle of Marston Moor he describes the "noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep."

As we turn now to consider the great poetic interpreters of thought in this fifth century, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, one rather singular fact may be noted. Not only does the period mirror to us much that is typical of all human

[1] Introduction to Euripides' *Bacchae*, p. xxiii. [2] *Essays*, p. 136.

striving toward improvement, but these poets themselves illustrate certain well-marked and diverse types of mind, which are just as characteristic of humanity to-day as they ever were. The sublime imagination of Aeschylus lifts him to a region where the great forces of the universe seem to be close about him. The moral government of all things, the misery and mystery of sin, the wisdom which comes by suffering form the background of his thought. Sophocles, on the other hand, is in the good sense a man of the world. He sounds the depths of life, but with the patience of one who would not have progress break with tradition. In the case of a complicated nature like that of Euripides, such general characterization is difficult. Taking the hint from a remark of the late Dr. James Adam,[1] I quote a passage from Arnold's essay on "Barbarians, Philistines, and Populace,"[2] in which he speaks of certain natures born in each class of society who have a curiosity about their best self, with a bent for seeing things as they are, for disentangling themselves from social machinery, and for simply concerning themselves with reason and the will of God. "This bent," says Mr. Arnold, "always tends to take them out of their class, and to make their distinguishing characteristic not their Barbarianism or their Philistinism, but their *humanity*. They have in general a rough time of it in their lives; . . . they set up a fire which enfilades, so to speak, the class with which they are ranked; and, in general, by the extrication of their best self as the self to develop, and by the simplicity of the ends fixed by them as paramount, they hinder the unchecked predominance of that class life which is the affirmation of our ordinary self, and seasonably disconcert mankind in their worship of machinery." Now Euripides was exactly one of these disconcerting personalities; a great thinker, a great poet, by no means an impec-

[1] *Religious Teachers of Greece*, p. 319.
[2] *Culture and Anarchy*, 1895, p. 85.

cable artist, and the prophet of a new era. When one thinks of this triad, each so different from the others, one wonders at the easy definitions of the Greek spirit and the talk about the worship of physical beauty, etc., which are sometimes heard. So characteristically human are the differing tendencies of these three men that it is always interesting to note the different types of people who specially admire the one or the other of them.

Before taking up more directly the work of the three masters, let us consider certain distinctive qualities of Greek Tragedy which grow out of the conditions under which it arose. It was connected with religious observance, as an element in the festival of Dionysus, and its subject-matter was inherited from the epic, and was thus in a measure prescribed. One play, to be sure, the *Persians* of Aeschylus, treats of a contemporary subject, and we hear of one or two others, but they are merely exceptions which prove the rule, and the tendency to select such subjects died out early. This traditional nature of the tragic material, its national character, and the knowledge the hearers had of the legends used must be borne in mind, if one would understand Greek Tragedy. The failure of Euripides to recognize some of the necessary limitations of this situation was disastrous to the artistic unity of certain of his plays. Contrast these conditions with the perfect freedom of choice in getting his subjects which Shakespeare exercised, and the liberty he enjoyed in doing anything he chose with most of his characters. Greek Tragedy is thus markedly representative of the Greek mind as a whole and of a national consciousness, much more so than modern tragedy could be, and, were it not for the very universal character of the thought of the time, a fact which I have already emphasized, the poets might have shown a provincial tone in their writings. They were, however, saved from this both by their intellectual surroundings, and by the fact that, in dealing with the legends of their own great

past, there was a natural tendency to idealize the characters represented and thus to identify them with certain fundamental ethical relations. Such identification, however, does not go so far as to make mere types or ethical abstractions of the characters; they live, and their individuality is clear and often striking, but the action is not determined primarily within the individual soul. The characters of Antigone, Oedipus, and Orestes are indeed interesting in themselves, but we think comparatively little of their personalities as distinct from the general considerations which they bring before us. One has only to remember Hamlet to contrast the modern attitude with all this. The deepest part of his tragedy lies within his own nature.[1] If one wants a modern instance of the ancient attitude, Wagner's drama of *Tannhäuser* might give it. Here we have as the tragic theme the opposing influences of sacred and profane love — Aphrodite Urania and Aphrodite Pandemus — as they manifest themselves in the experience of Tannhäuser. Speaking generally then, and with the reservations which large generalizations commonly call for, Greek Tragedy is a drama of ideas, modern tragedy a drama of character. The latter gives its interpretation of life *in* character, the former *through* character. The sequel, however, will show that the Greek poets are constantly putting an increased emphasis on character.[2] With these general remarks as a preface, let

[1] Cf. A. C. Bradley, *Oxford Lectures on Poetry*, p. 77.

[2] It is interesting to observe how certain of these general tendencies in Greek Tragedy seem to be summed up and, as it were, explained in the principles of Tragedy which Aristotle enunciates in his *Poëtics*, principles that naturally depend upon the drama as it had developed in the century before the philosopher lived. Take these words, for example, about plot: "The plot, then, is the first principle, and as it were the soul of the tragedy; character comes second. . . . Tragedy is the imitation of an action and of the agents because of the action" (chap. 6), and other passages to the same effect. (See especially, chap. 9, the remarks about the universal and particular.) Then in the various remarks Aristotle has about the kind of person who will make an effective tragic hero, he gives us valuable comment on the actual practice of

us pass on to a nearer consideration of the three great masters.

Aeschylus was born about 525 B.C. He was of the old nobility, but in sympathy with the earlier ideals of the Athenian democracy. He came from Eleusis, that home of the Mysteries, and source of some of the deeper currents of Greek religious thought. It would appear that he showed his literary ability early in life, but was called away from such work by the terrible experiences of the Persian Wars. He fought in the three great battles of Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea, and his brothers, too, were soldiers at this time. From the year 472, the date of his *Persians*, until the time of his death in 456, Aeschylus was the leading Athenian poet, even though his supremacy was occasionally called in question by the rising genius of Sophocles. No doubt he had attained to this position before the date mentioned, and his *Suppliant Women*, an undated but earlier play, and our only really archaic specimen of the Athenian drama, has much of high poetic promise in it. Aeschylus appears to have been at least three times in Sicily, and thus to have been familiar with the wider aspects of Greek civilization, and in one or two plays he shows an interest in geographical detail such as might suggest a fondness for travel, and certainly a curiosity about half-known or unknown lands. These are all the facts in the life of Aeschylus which are reasonably certain; and those which were probably of chief importance in his spiritual development are his early life at Eleusis, the experiences of the Persian Wars, and his travel to distant regions.

Only seven of the ninety plays he wrote are preserved. Each play is part of a trilogy, or series of three, through

Greek Tragedy. He limits the field of selection, as we should expect, and also the qualities of character in the chief personages, though not quite so much, I believe, as some scholars have been inclined to think. It should be remembered, too, that his theory does not seem to meet quite adequately all the facts even of Greek Tragedy.

which some leading idea may be followed, but no trilogy except the *Oresteia* (*Agamemnon*, *Choëphori*, and *Eumenides*) has been preserved, and the other four plays are, therefore, in a sense fragments. This is a fact which often makes it difficult to be sure whether we understand correctly the entire bearing of a given drama. In the case of the *Prometheus Bound*, for example, one of the best of all the plays, the loss of the *Prometheus Freed* (probably the second play) makes it impossible to understand how the poet's plan was finally worked out. We are, however, able to conjecture what that plan was, since a few fragments of this play have been preserved, and there are helpful remarks in scholiastic comment. The third play of the trilogy, *Prometheus the Fire-Bearer*, is practically unknown, though it is probable that in this the reconciliation between Zeus and the Titan Prometheus received its seal by the establishment of Prometheus as the Attic divinity of fire.[1] Thus honor was shown an existing cult, as is the case in the third play of the *Oresteia*, the *Eumenides*, in which the *Furies* become the *Gentle Goddesses*, and receive honors of worship. To introduce into the drama the beginnings of such religious cults is common also with Euripides.

It is impossible here to attempt any analysis of the plays of Aeschylus, but some notion of the quality of his imagination may be gained by considering briefly the general plan of the two trilogies referred to — those of Prometheus and Orestes. The action of the *Prometheus* moves in superhuman regions. The old order of violence in the government of the universe, represented by the Titans, has given way before the enlightened rule of Zeus, through which the ideas of cosmic order and justice shall prevail. Prometheus, who is of the race of Titans, and his mother Themis have been on the side of Zeus in the struggle. When this is over and Zeus is seeking to organize his rule, he finds man sunk so

[1] Cf. Sophocles, *Oedip. Col.*, 55, ὁ πυρφόρος θεός.

low that he deems it necessary to let the old race die out, and to create a new one in its place. In this purpose he clashes with Prometheus, who is man's champion. Prometheus steals fire, which has been concealed, and gives it to mankind. Thus is man able to raise himself, and the purpose of Zeus is thwarted. The play of Aeschylus depicts the punishment of Prometheus for this rebellion; but the Titan is immortal and cannot be utterly destroyed, and the opening scene of the play represents Strength and Force, with the god Hephaestus, fastening him to the storm-beaten rocks of farthest Scythia. But Prometheus will not yield, and he refuses to reveal a secret the knowledge of which would enable Zeus to protect his dynasty from final overthrow. Zeus threatens the rebel, and at the end of the play he casts him amid fire and storm, still unconquered, into the abyss. A considerable part of the drama, which has no plot in the sense in which this term is used of Sophocles and Euripides, consists of conversations between Prometheus and the chorus of Oceanides, and of an attempt by Oceanus himself to move the captive from his stubborn mood. The maddened Io, too, another victim of Zeus, is introduced, and her wanderings and their happy issue are foretold by Prometheus, perhaps with the idea, on the poet's part, of suggesting that in the end the plans of Zeus may be benevolent. The chorus, of Ocean's daughters, is a poetic creation of great beauty, and in their sympathy for the prisoner and their readiness to share his fate, in spite of a gentle disapproval of his course, they seem in a way to sum up the impression which the drama makes: "Lo! how thankless thy gift, Beloved! Speak — what help shall there be, and where? What succor from creatures of a day? Dost not see the feeble weakness, dreamlike, to which the blind race of man is fettered? In no wise shall mortal counsels overpass the harmony of Zeus." (Vv. 545 ff.)

Aeschylus has depicted the conflict between two actions

each good in itself — a common enough cause of tragedy in all ages.[1] Prometheus suffers nobly for his love of man, but he cannot grasp the great purposes of Zeus which work together for good.[2] Yet in the *Prometheus Bound* it is the Titan who awakens sympathy, and Zeus is the harsh and unjust ruler. This, however, could never have been the impression which Aeschylus intended his whole trilogy to leave on the mind. Years before in his *Suppliant Maidens* he wrote of Zeus: —

> Justly his deed was done,
> Unto what other one
> Of all the gods, should I for justice turn?
> From him our race did spring;
> Creator he and King,
> Ancient of Days and wisdom he, and Might.
> As bark before the wind,
> So, wafted by his mind,
> Moves every counsel, each device aright.
> (Vv. 590 ff. Morshead.)

> Though the deep will of Zeus be hard to track,
> Yet doth it flame and glance,
> A beacon in the dark, 'mid clouds of chance
> That wrap mankind.
> Yea, though the counsel fall, undone it shall not lie,
> Whate'er be shaped and fixed within Zeus' ruling mind —
> Dark as a solemn grove, with somber leafage shaded,
> His paths of purpose wind,
> A marvel to man's eye.
> (Vv. 86 ff. Morshead.)

And again, many years after the *Prometheus*, he wrote in the *Agamemnon*: —

> And whoso now shall bid the triumph-chant arise,
> To Zeus and Zeus alone,
> He shall be found the truly wise.
> 'Tis Zeus alone who shows the perfect way

[1] Cf. Bradley, *Oxford Lectures on Poetry*, p. 86.

[2] Cf. *Heraclitus*, Frag. 61, Bywater, *συντελεῖ ἅπαντα ὁ θεὸς πρὸς ἁρμονίαν τῶν ὅλων, οἰκονομῶν τὰ συμφέροντα.* "God accomplishes all things for the harmony of the whole, ordering that which is for the best."

> Of Knowledge: He hath ruled,
> Men shall learn wisdom by affliction schooled.
> (Vv. 173 ff. Morshead.)

The poet then unquestionably reconciled the powers which are so opposed in the *Prometheus Bound*, but how this was done we cannot know in detail.

Turning now to the *Oresteia*, we are able to understand the poet's method more clearly. The work was performed in 458 B.C., two years before the death of Aeschylus, and it represents the most perfect development of his poetic genius. Here the immediate surroundings are no longer superhuman. The tragedy, however, illustrates the working of two principles conceived as eternal laws — that sin shall ultimately meet with punishment and that the evil deed begets a progeny like unto itself — a progeny which may appear in succeeding generations. The first of these principles depends on what was a popular ethical maxim that it was for the "doer (the sinner) to suffer." [1] The second, that sin begets its children,[2] is the poet's own belief, differing from the less spiritual popular saying that an excessive prosperity engenders vice as its offspring. These are the inexorable laws of life, necessary for human development, but frequently involving the individual in what seems unmerited suffering. He sins indeed himself, but when the taint of sin is in his blood, how shall he escape? This ethical problem the poet does not solve. Perhaps we may ask whether any one has solved it. In the *Oresteia* Aeschylus seeks a solution in the reconciliation which he effects between Apollo, who has commanded Orestes to take vengeance for his father's death, and the Erinyes, whose function it is to haunt him who has unlawfully shed human blood. But this is to avoid an ethical solution of the question and to take refuge in the mythology of Greek religion.[3]

[1] Cf. *Choëphori*, vs. 313, *δράσαντι παθεῖν τριγέρων μῦθος τάδε φωνεῖ.*
[2] Cf. *Agamemnon*, vv. 750 ff.
[3] Cf. Adam, *Religious Teachers of Greece*, p. 153.

Yet there is in this mythological solution the suggestion that he who is innocent of evil purpose must be saved. In any case, however, it is the collision between certain lines of duty enjoined by eternal law[1] which gives Aeschylus his tragic situation, and which produces what has been called the "spiritual waste" (Bradley, *l.c.*) involved in all tragedy.

In the first play of this trilogy, the *Agamemnon*, the family taint of inherited sin becomes manifest through the pride of the conqueror of Troy. He had further done a deed of blood in seeking to appease the wrath of Artemis by the sacrifice of his child Iphigeneia, and had thereby incurred the hatred of Clytemnestra, his wife. In the absence of the Greeks at Troy, Clytemnestra had sinned with Aegisthus, against her husband, and the guilty pair were in control at Argos. The treacherous wife gives Agamemnon a false welcome on his return from Troy, casts a net over him while he is in the bath, and slays him, exulting in the deed. So ends the first play. This sinful act begets as an offspring in the next generation the slaying of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus by Orestes. The blood of Agamemnon calls for vengeance, and Apollo commands the matricide. The fulfilment of this command is the subject of the second play, the *Choëphori*, or *Libation-Bearers*.[2]

[1] Note the bearing on this of Professor Goodwin's convincing interpretation of μοῖρα μοίραν (*Agamem.* vs. 1026), *Trans. Am. Philol. Assoc.* 1877, pp. 14 ff.

[2] Browning (*Pauline*) in a few lines gives a vivid sketch of two great scenes in these plays, that in the *Agamemnon*, in which the returned hero enters the palace, and the second at the close of the *Choëphori*, when the half-crazed Orestes tries to justify the deed which has made him victor with the "curse of pollution for his prize" (*Choëph.*, vs. 1017) : —

> The king
> Treading the purple calmly to his death,
> While round him, like the clouds of eve, all dusk,
> The giant shades of fate, silently flitting,
> Pile the dim outline of the coming doom.
> And the boy
> With his white breast and brow, and clustering curls,
> Streaked with his mother's blood, and striving hard
> To tell his story ere his reason goes.
>
> (Quoted by Morshead in his translation.)

After the bloody deed is done, the third play, the *Furies* or *Eumenides*, opens with a wonderful scene in which Orestes has taken refuge at Delphi from the pursuit of the Furies. The grisly band are around him in slumber, as he clings to the altar. Thus do they describe their office (vv. 307 ff.): —

> Of Justice are we ministers,
> And whosoe'er of men may stand
> Lifting a pure unsullied hand,
> That man no doom of ours incurs,
> And walks thro' all his mortal path
> Untouched by woe, unharmed by wrath.
> But if, as yonder man, he hath
> Blood on his hands he strives to hide,
> We stand avengers at his side,
> Decreeing, *Thou hast wronged the dead;*
> *We are doom's witnesses to thee.*
> The price of blood, his hands have shed,
> We wring from him; in life, in death,
> Hard at his side are we! (Vv. 307 ff. Morshead.)

So in the spirit of Orestes is the consciousness of having followed divine law in exacting vengeance assailed by the remorse for his bloody deed. The poet transfers this conflict to the realm of Greek religion, making the Olympian Apollo represent one side, and for the other calling forth from the valley of the shadow the dreaded Chthonian Erinyes. At last by the persuasion and authority of Athena the fearful Daughters of Night become Eumenides, or spirits of goodwill, and the sufferer's soul is at peace. The mighty power in the human spirit, Remorse, becomes, when sin is absent, the beneficent power which watches over all the ways of men.[1] It is a thought worthy of a great poet and seer who has revealed

> A world above man's head to let him see
> How boundless might his soul's horizon be.

But to make clear with what splendor and wealth of thought this revelation has been made would far exceed what is now

[1] *Eumenides*, vs. 930, *πάντα γὰρ αὗται τὰ κατ' ἀνθρώπους ἔλαχον διέπειν.*

possible. With a mind of such mystic and transcendental quality it is not strange that the language of Aeschylus should at times become overloaded with epithet, and that enough of a bombastic tone should occasionally appear in it to justify the good-natured fun of the *Frogs* of Aristophanes. In the *Oresteia*, however, there is little trace of such tendencies, and the same wealth of imagination which is shown in the general conception of the trilogy appears also in the language; it is extraordinarily rich in beautiful metaphor and simile. In spite of the many reminiscences of the epic in Aeschylus, his language takes its main color from the lyric, and this may be seen in the dialogue as well as in the choruses. His gifts as a lyric poet are indeed quite as marked as his dramatic ability, and nowhere is his creative imagination more evident than in the best of the choral songs. Aeschylus, of course, shows his varied powers with varying degrees of excellence in different plays, but in the *Agamemnon* there seems to be a concentration of his abilities. The first three choral odes have all the qualities which may be looked for in the greatest poetry: there is the rapid and skilful narrative which Pindar knows so well how to use; there is the rich thought of a mind that broods deeply on the mysteries of life; there is great beauty and pathos in all that has to do with the sacrifice of Iphigeneia, and in the description of the deserted Menelaus, to whom by night come visions of past happiness which forthwith are gone "on wings that follow the ways of sleep"; and there is the bitter description of the woes which the strife of battle brings to those who remain at home, when Ares, war's money-changer, who traffics not in gold but in human bodies, sends back in place of those who went forth only scanty ashes in an urn. The great scene in this play in which the captive Cassandra foretells the impending doom and her own death shows a combination of lyric and dramatic power that can hardly be paralleled elsewhere. It strongly confirms the impression of great intellectual force and originality

which the work of Aeschylus in general makes. As was remarked in the case of the *Prometheus*, he has not the carefully constructed plot which is characteristic of his successors, nor shall we generally find distinctly drawn human characters, since his personages are used primarily to illustrate the working of inexorable law, but to this rule there is one splendid exception — that of Clytemnestra. Perhaps there may have been others in the lost plays. In spite of the fact that she is described (vs. 1500) as merely the "grim avenger" of the family in the semblance of Agamemnon's wife, her fierce passion and masterful intellect appear with wonderful distinctness. The great speeches which she makes are subtle in thought, splendidly dramatic, and brilliant with forceful rhetoric. Her powerful personality is clear. This fact it is important to note, because in the subsequent development of the drama not only the structure of the plot, but the delineation of individual character becomes more and more marked. We may now turn to Sophocles, whose plays illustrate these changes, and others.

Sophocles was born about 495 B.C. and died in 405. His father was apparently a prosperous manufacturer, and the boy had all the advantages of careful education. His home was at Colonus, a beautiful spot near Athens, and the scene of his *Oedipus Coloneus*. His affection for the place comes out very clearly in some fine lines of this play. As a lad of fifteen he is said to have been chosen to lead the paean sung in honor of the victory at Salamis. At the age of twenty-eight he won his first prize in the tragic contests, over Aeschylus, and from that time on he was often in the first place. Sophocles held public office and took part in religious observance, even as priest. It would seem that he possessed a charm of personality which made him welcome to all, and gave him as happy a life as falls to man's lot. With a nature keenly artistic, Sophocles found in the prosperous and hopeful

Athens of his youth and maturity an atmosphere eminently suited to him, and he is of all the poets of Greece the most typically Athenian. A man of this temperament would never produce a drama of Aeschylean quality. Perhaps it may be said that such work was out of his reach, but it is truer to say that he would naturally turn, so far as the historical limitations of his material would allow (and this is an important reservation), to the study of human character. We hear of Sophocles as introducing a third actor and giving up the trilogy as a closely linked series of plays, but these things are merely external, means to an end, the end being greater dramatic concentration and a more distinct portrayal of the individual. All this is thoroughly in the spirit of the time. The talk of Socrates with the youth of Athens is constantly turned toward the development of the individual soul. The same thing may be seen in progress of art. From the middle of the fifth century on, with the growing skill of the artists, a realistic tendency asserts itself, and soon after the end of the century the era of portraiture begins. To make this portrayal of character effective, striking scenes are needed, and situations which require the exercise of judgment and choice. Hence the poet, whose attention is now concentrated on the single play, must give great heed to plot. And so in the plays of Sophocles (there exist but seven out of the hundred or more which he wrote) we find a larger use of the *peripeteia*, or reversal of fortune, of various types of *anagnorisis*, or recognition, and of the tying up and unloosing of the tragic knot — all the elements of which Aristotle makes so much in his *Poetics*. He indeed places plot first, writing clearly under the strong influence of Sophocles's *Oedipus-Tyrannus*, but to draw the line very sharply between the two elements is no great gain, since, though character only becomes apparent through the action involved in plot, the nature of the action will often be determined by character. Now Sophocles was no radical, and he found the Athenian drama with

well-fixed traditions; it had, moreover, grown up in close association with religion, and Sophocles was by nature religious, with a regard for the religious beliefs and forms of the people about him. It is not likely that he shared these beliefs in a literal sense, but as a true poet he spiritualized the ideal elements in them. Neither Aeschylus nor Sophocles trouble themselves about the contradiction which of course arises when the legends which they use are in sharp opposition to their ideals, though they may reveal this opposition in the background. These legends are the accepted material upon which the drama is conditioned. To create characters, however, which shall be real and which shall at the same time represent certain fundamental ethical principles that depend on man's relation to a divine and unseen world, and to do this without violating the traditions of the Attic stage, is an artistic problem of extraordinary difficulty. Sophocles solved it with high success, and Jebb's remark that his greatness as a poet "depends primarily on his greatness as an artist"[1] is certainly true. All the seven plays, though of varying merit, are good, and each has some character, not always the chief one, who gives evidence of the poet's power in subtle psychological analysis, and in the portrayal of changing feeling. In the *Antigone*, which, with the possible exception of the *Ajax*, is the earliest of the preserved plays, the tragic situation arises out of the conflict between human law, good in itself, even if sometimes wrongly applied, and the unwritten laws (vs. 454), begotten, as the poet says, not of man's mortal nature, "Nay, nor shall forgetfulness ever lull them to sleep; God is mighty in them, and he grows not old."[2] The background of the play is thus rather Aeschylean in character, and so plain is the opposition between the conflicting laws, that the plot of the drama is very simple. Its great power, apart from the beauty of language

[1] *Classical Greek Poetry*, p. 189.
[2] *Oedipus Tyrannus*, vs. 870.

and workmanship, lies in the character of her who represents divine law — Antigone. In her Sophocles has certainly created one of the great characters of literature. She is passionate and steadfast in her devotion to the right, tender and gentle in her domestic affection, and her great qualities of heart are but made clearer by her occasional impatience with her weaker sister Ismene, and especially by her momentary doubt at the end as to the mysterious ways in which the gods have led her. Shortly before his death Sophocles gave another picture of this beautiful character in his *Oedipus Coloneus*, and here she is much the same, only it is the picture of the patient and watchful daughter who has for years sought to lighten her father's burdens. In the Deianeira of the *Maidens of Trachis* we have another extraordinarily subtle and very different delineation of feminine character. In this play, one of the later ones, the action, so far as Deianeira is concerned, moves on a purely human level, and the tragedy which overtakes her comes without the adequate error on the sufferer's part which Aristotle would require. This, however, does not detract from the picture of the gentle and charming lady, dignified, self-controlled, and yet very human, which Sophocles has created, a character worthy to be placed beside the great gentleman whom he has given us in the Theseus of the *Oedipus Coloneus*. Another remarkable study in character is the Neoptolemus of the *Philoctetes*, a late play, which has a romantic tinge, as indeed the *Maidens of Trachis* has. Here the poet shows the successful struggle of a young, fresh, and unspoiled mind against the sophistries of the politician Odysseus. These examples (and many more might be added) indicate how much the spirit of the drama had changed in the matter of the presentation of character [1] since the days of Aeschylus.

[1] The saying attributed to Sophocles (Plutarch, *De profectibus in virtute*, c. 7) that his fully developed style was *ἠθικώτατον* seems to show his conscious attitude toward this change.

To see how great the change was in the construction of the plot one has only to turn to the *Oedipus Tyrannus*. There is no lack of skilful character-drawing in this play, but the structure of its plot is one of the triumphs of dramatic art. The plot and the characters are, however, so marvelously interwoven in the drama's fine fabric that it seems almost a failure in artistic appreciation to think of them separately. The action moves with perfect sureness and directness to the catastrophe; little by little the king draws together the different threads of evidence which shall reveal his identity, at first quite unconsciously, at last with a feverish haste born of a suspicion that he cannot acknowledge even to himself. No amount of re-reading seems to detract from the absorbing interest of the scenes which lead up to the fearful revelation. The choral work in the play calls also for special remark. So perfectly do the choruses sum up the feeling which is awakened by the dramatic situation at the point when each song is introduced that one almost forgets the historic fact of a Greek play's being made up of the two traditional elements, one lyric and one dramatic. Most of the choruses, too, are of rare lyric beauty.

A drama of the character which Sophocles produced could not be presented in a style like that of Aeschylus, and there is some evidence that Sophocles toiled long before he developed the very delicate diction which characterizes his dialogue.[1] It is exact, restrained, and apparently simple, since the vocabulary, in contrast with Aeschylus's, is that of everyday life, but there are often subtle shades of meaning which lurk beneath the surface. The simplicity is thus illusive. This extraordinary skill and delicacy in the use of language helps Sophocles in his mastery of the so-called "tragic irony," which he uses more frequently and with more subtlety than either Aeschylus or Euripides. The "ironical" phrase, with its double, ominous meaning, is often uttered

[1] See the passage cited in the Note on page 112.

by the victim of the coming tragedy himself, as in the case of Oedipus, and the tragic effects of pity and fear are thereby heightened throughout the course of the action. The late Mr. Churton Collins, in an essay on "Sophocles and Shakespeare," has pointed out the resemblances between them. These are very numerous, but there is one striking difference. In Sophocles the divine background to the affairs of men is more prominent, more real, and to understand the poet's attitude toward the mystery of suffering (one cannot call it an explanation of the mystery) we must keep in mind his perpetual consciousness of a divine order. With Aeschylus it is a stern law that suffering is the reward of sin, though in the case of Orestes the final reconciliation indicates that the poet had a sense of the injustice of suffering when the act of the victim was without evil intent. Sophocles, on the other hand, clearly holds that the innocent do suffer, and he seems to make a tacit confession that the ways of heaven cannot always be reconciled to man's idea of justice. "For the wise the divine decrees are as riddles, only to fools is God a simple and quick teacher," he says in a fragment (Nauck, 700). But suffering may not be wholly evil. Sophocles accepts the old doctrine that wisdom comes by suffering (πάθει μάθος), and, as Professor Butcher has said, "he raises it from a prudential or moral maxim into a religious mystery."[1] Theseus *through his trials* has learned to say (*O. C.*, 568) to the aged Oedipus, "Well know I that I am a man, and that in the morrow my portion is no greater than thine" (Jebb). Very characteristic of the poet are the famous lines, so Shakespearian in flavor, which Oedipus addresses to Theseus:—

> Fair Aegeus' son, only to gods in heaven
> Comes no old age nor death of anything;
> All else is turmoiled by our Master Time.
> The earth's strength fades and manhood's glory fades,

[1] *Aspects of Greek Genius*, p. 125.

Faith dies, and unfaith blossoms as a flower.
And who shall find in the open streets of men
Or secret places of his heart's own love
One wind blow true forever? Lo! or soon
Or late sweet turns to bitter, and anon
The bitter changes once again to love.
(*O.C.*, vv. 607 ff., G. Murray, except from "Lo!" on.)

But in all the confusion "Sophocles seems," as has been well said, "to invite us to lift our eyes from the suffering of the individual to a consideration of the ulterior purpose which Providence is seeking to fulfil." [1] "Courage, my daughter, courage," says the chorus to Electra (vs. 174), "great still in heaven is Zeus, who sees and governs all." And again, in the *Maidens of Trachis* (vs. 140) the chorus says to the anxious Deianeira, "for who hath seen Zeus thus unmindful of his children?" Mercy, too, Sophocles says, Zeus hath to share his throne (*O.C.*, 1269), even as Shakespeare enthrones her "in the heart of kings." The serene light of Sophocles shines forth in a verse of our own day: —

And all is well, though faith and form
Be sundered in the night of fear;
Well roars the storm to those that hear
A deeper voice across the storm.

The atmosphere which one finds in the works of Euripides is absolutely different from this. Instead of serenity, there is revolt. Euripides was born in the year of the battle of Salamis (B.C. 480). He was thus only fifteen years younger than Sophocles, and he died in 406, a year before the latter poet. The brief biographies which have come down to us contain much apparently idle gossip, and it is not easy to separate true from false. We gather from these, in spite of the gibes of Attic Comedy, that the family of Euripides was one of good standing, and that he had the advantages of early schooling. Unlike his two great predecessors, he

[1] Adam, *Religious Teachers of Greece*, p. 173.

was a recluse by nature, deeply interested in the philosophic speculation of his day and greatly affected by it. His dramas are a sufficient proof of the truth of this tradition. Personally he was not popular, and his plays were little appreciated during his lifetime, for he won only five first prizes, and one of these was awarded after his death. As a whole his life appears to have been an unhappy one, for he represented the more restless spirit of his age so completely that he lost touch with its conservative elements, and his attitude was in large measure one of hostility to the society about him. In 408 he left Athens, gladly it would seem, and retired to the court of Archelaus of Macedon. Here he appears to have been happier, for his last two plays, the *Bacchae* and *Iphigeneia at Aulis* (the latter unfinished), are without the gloom that clings to several of the dramas dating from the last years of his Athenian life. Out of some ninety-two plays we have eighteen — a large proportion in comparison with the seven each from Aeschylus and Sophocles. This fact is due to the great popularity of Euripides in the years following his death, for he has qualities which suited the taste of the Alexandrian period.

It is well-nigh impossible to avoid giving an unfair impression of Euripides in any brief characterization of his work. His faults are easy to perceive; to appreciate his greatness requires study. In the matter of form he introduced the prologue which tells the story of the myth and explains the beginning of the action. Many of the present prologues are probably elaborated to suit the needs of non-Attic audiences, but the use of this opening is Euripidean. One may find fault with it, but the fault is after all not radical. Euripides, in many cases, closes his dramas by the interference of divine power, the *deus ex machina*, or by a prophecy. One can hardly dispute the truth of Aristotle's (*Poet.*, xv) observation that such devices, if used, should be for matters external to the action. It is difficult to see why Euripides so

frequently made this histrionic appeal to divine agency, since in many cases he might easily have avoided it. Possibly one of his reasons was to counteract the popular prejudice against his supposed atheism; or perhaps the human instinct which makes inherited forms survive belief had something to do with it, and the poet, while making very plain his disbelief in the worth of the traditional mythology, was himself not ready to put aside the historic atmosphere of the Attic drama. He was indeed something of an antiquarian. On the whole, then, with one or two exceptions, the plots of Euripides are less well constructed than those of Sophocles; but in the dramatic vividness, intensity, and pathos of some of the scenes the younger poet is unsurpassed, and he often uses the so-called "recognition" with splendid effect. In delineation of character, too, Euripides has great power. Such virgin-martyrs as Macaria in the *Heraclidae*, Polyxena in the *Hecuba*, and Iphigenia in the *Iphigenia at Aulis* are nobly conceived and beautifully portrayed. Among his men there are none so interesting as the Oedipus and Neoptolemus of Sophocles, though, within their lesser range, Ion and the fine peasant of the *Electra* are well drawn and attractive. But the impatience of Euripides with the popular religion, and his own philosophic bent of mind, often injure the consistency of his characters. To take an instance from the *Ion*, a play which has real romantic beauty: Ion is the natural son of Creusa, daughter of Erechtheus, king of Athens, by Apollo, who had done the maid violence. The child was exposed to death, but was spirited away by Apollo to Delphi, where he was brought up as a temple ministrant in holy innocence. The mother, supposing the child dead, comes to Delphi in after years to consult the oracle, and Ion hears the old tale of wrong, without knowing how he is concerned in it. Now the play opens with a most beautiful and romantic picture of Ion's innocent and peaceful life at Delphi — there are few things more charming in Greek lit-

erature — but as soon as he hears of the god's deed, he breaks forth in this wise: —

> But there is need, methinks, to expostulate
> With Phoebus. What is this? To force a maid
> And then abandon! Leave the helpless fruit
> Of stolen joys to perish! Nay, O Lord,
> Seek rather to be good as thou art strong.
> For wickedness in man the gods chastise:
> What justice then that ye, who set the law
> To mortal man, should sin against the law?
> If, if (to feign a thing impossible)
> For such-like thefts upon humanity
> Thou, or Poseidon, or the King of Heaven,
> Should be amerced; to quit the fines would leave
> Your temples empty. Ye, to have your will,
> Do thoughtless wrong: then just it is to blame
> Not imitative man, but them whose taste
> Instructs our admiration what to ape.
>
> (Vv. 436 ff. Verrall.)

This passage not only shows lack of consistency in drawing the character of Ion, but it also illustrates how ready Euripides is to bring forward the grosser side of Greek legend, and to discredit the religion he did not believe in. This is of course the exact opposite of the attitude in such matters of Aeschylus and Sophocles. Euripides is out of harmony with his material, and his eager and restless searching after truth obscures his sense of artistic possibility. The modern conception of Tragedy cannot be bounded by any cycle of legends, and Euripides is the herald to the new era, although the seed of the new growth may indeed be found in the subtle portrayal of character in Sophocles. Euripides has also another tendency which sometimes injures the effect of his characters. This is a fondness for the sophistic rhetoric of debate in which heroic personages approximate in their diction and thought toward the "man in the street." Incongruity is the result, and offense to conservative taste (and good taste for that matter),

as the gibes of Aristophanes show. Aristotle (*Poet.*, XXV) quotes Sophocles as saying that he himself made people as they ought to be (*i.e.* ought to be to meet the dramatic requirements); Euripides made them as they are. But a militant realism is not compatible with heroic ideals. Euripides also changed the function of the chorus by separating it in great measure from the dramatic action, thus making its songs often merely interludes. The change was very likely partly due to the influence of the new and more elaborate school of music which came in at this time, bringing with it a taste for monodies in the drama. By this method Euripides often attains to splendid choral effects, but he writes the swan-song of the chorus as an integral part of the drama. The comic side of some of these innovations is amusingly put by Aristophanes in the *Frogs*. Euripides, and to some extent Dionysus, are accusing Aeschylus of using overloaded language and of introducing preposterous hybrid animals into his plays. So Aeschylus says to Euripides: "What then is your practice?" The latter replies: —

No cock-horse in my plays, by Zeus, no goat-stag there you'll see,
Such figures as are blazoned forth in Median tapistry.
When I first took the art from you, bloated and swoln, poor thing,
With turgid gasconading words and heavy dieting,
First I reduced and toned her down, and made her slim and neat
With wordlets and with exercise and poultices of beet,
And next a dose of chatter-juice, distilled from books, I gave her,
And monodies she took, with sharp Cephisophon for flavor.
I never used haphazard words, or plunged abruptly in;
Who entered first explained at large the drama's origin.

* * * * * * *

Canons of verse I introduced, and neatly chiseled wit;
To look, to scan: to plot, to plan: to twist, to turn, to woo:
On all to spy; in all to pry. Aesch. You did: I say so too.
Eurip. I showed them scenes of common life, the things we know and see,
Where any blunder would at once by all detected be.

(Vv. 737 ff. Rogers.)

With all his admitted faults, then, wherein lies the claim of Euripides to be considered a very great poet? As the prophet of a new era he of course has great historic importance, and his mind is as a mirror to reflect the deepest thought of his day. Hecuba's invocation to Zeus in the *Troades* (she has been to school in Athens, Mr. Adam remarks[1]) illustrates this latter fact: —

> O earth's Upbearer, thou whose throne is Earth,
> Whoe'er thou be, O past our finding out,
> Zeus, be thou Nature's Law, or mind of man,
> To thee I pray; for treading soundless paths,
> In justice dost thou guide all mortal things.
>
> (Vv. 884 ff. Way.)

Here is a sort of epitome of the philosophical questions of the time; but it is in the last line that the poet reveals one of the great foundations of his power, the passion for Justice, and justice to suffering humanity. "Think you," he says in a fragment (Nauck, 508) of very modern tone: —

> Think you that deeds of wrong spring to the gods
> On wings, and then some one, on Zeus's book
> Writes them, and Zeus beholding the record
> Gives judgment? Nay, the whole expanse of heaven
> Would not suffice, if Zeus wrote there man's sins;
> Nor could he send to each his punishment
> From such review. Justice is on the earth,
> Is here, is by us, if men will but see."
>
> (Westcott.)

This deep sympathy with man's life, of which we have a gentler expression in the later poetry of the Anthology and of Theocritus (cf. *Idyl* XXI), when combined, as it often is in Euripides, with great intensity of tragic feeling, with splendid power of language and of vivid expression, raises the best of his poetry to the level of great art. It is a significant fact

[1] *Religious Teachers of Greece*, p. 299.

that in the early years of the last century, perhaps partly under the influence of the German critic, August Wilhelm von Schlegel, Euripides suffered a sort of eclipse. With the growth of the humanitarian movement which characterizes the latter part of the last century and the present one, his real greatness has again been recognized, and his admirers have become many and enthusiastic. Here is concrete testimony to his universal power. Euripides lights up many of his plays with a romantic charm, and he shows an intense feeling for the influence of nature. Neither Aeschylus nor Sophocles lacks a keen sense of natural beauty, but in Euripides nature seems a more objective thing around which the poet's fancy loves to play. The *Bacchae*, one of the finest of all Greek plays, is filled with this feeling. The poet, old man as he was when he wrote it, has caught the note of the woodland. The hills of Macedonia have made him young again, and in the Dionysiac gospel of enthusiasm he has found life. The following beautiful rendering of one of the odes from this play (vv. 863 ff.), by Professor Murray, well sums up many of the qualities of Euripides which I have tried to bring out.

The damsels of the chorus sing first in the spirit of Bacchic frenzy, and of intense longing for the solitudes of the woodland. Shall they escape to the peaceful forest as the fawn which eludes its pursuers? The refrain, I believe, is an exaltation of vengeance, so that here, too, the spirit is more or less that of the frenzied Bacchanal. Its closing line is proverbial and is associated with Theban legend as the burden of the song at the wedding of Cadmus. Professor Murray, however, interprets the refrain somewhat differently. In the latter part of the song the tone changes. Here the poet's thought is lifted up into the more spiritual regions of the idealized religion of Dionysus. The gods will not suffer unrighteousness to be; have faith in the divine strength of that which in the long ages has become the law and which is grounded in nature. Yet is life sad, and its good things

fall to men in no equal portions. Hope finds happy issue and hope deceives, "one step enough for me."

Some maidens

Will they ever come to me, ever again,
The long long dances,
On through the dark till the dim stars wane?
Shall I feel the dew on my throat, and the stream
Of wind in my hair? Shall our white feet gleam
In the dim expanses?
Oh, feet of a fawn to the greenwood fled,
Alone in the grass and the loveliness;
Leap of the hunted, no more in dread,
Beyond the snares and the deadly press:
Yet a voice still in the distance sounds,
A voice and a fear and a haste of hounds;
O wildly laboring, fiercely fleet,
Onward yet by river and glen. . . .
Is it joy or terror, ye storm-swift feet? . . .
To the dear lone lands untroubled of men,
Where no voice sounds, and amid the shadowy green
The little things of the woodland live unseen.

What else is wisdom? What of man's endeavour
Or God's high grace, so lovely and so great?
To stand from fear set free, to breathe and wait;
To hold a hand uplifted over Hate;
And shall not Loveliness be loved forever?[1]

Others

O Strength of God, slow art thou and still,
Yet failest never!
On them that worship the Ruthless Will,
On them that dream, doth His judgment wait.
Dreams of the proud man, making great
And greater ever,
Things which are not of God. In wide
And devious coverts, hunter-wise,

[1] The meaning of the Greek is more exactly, "What is wisdom, or what fairer boon hath God given mortals than to raise the hand in victory o'er the foe? What is fair is loved forever."

He coucheth Time's unhasting stride,
  Following, following him whose eyes
Look not to Heaven. For all is vain,
The pulse of the heart, the plot of the brain,
That striveth beyond the laws that live.
And is thy faith so much to give,
Is it so hard a thing to see,
That the Spirit of God, whate'er it be,
The Law that abides and changes not, ages long,
The Eternal and Nature-born — these things be strong?

What else is Wisdom? What of man's endeavour
  Or God's high grace, so lovely and so great?
  To stand from fear set free, to breathe and wait;
  To hold a hand uplifted over Hate;
And shall not Loveliness be loved forever?

Leader

  Happy he, on the weary sea,
Who hath fled the tempest and won the haven.
  Happy whoso hath risen, free,
Above his striving. For strangely graven
  Is the orb of life, that one and another
  In gold and power may outpass his brother.
  And men in their millions float and flow
And seethe with a million hopes as leaven;
  And they win their Will or they miss their Will,
  And the hopes are dead or are pined for still;
  But whoe'er can know,
  As the long days go,
That to Live is happy, hath found his Heaven![1]

Such are the voices of these three great "Bards of Passion,"

> "Voices of unreturning days, which breathe
> The spirit of a day that never dies."

J. R. Wheeler.

[1] The meaning of the Greek is, "Him I count blessed whose life is happy from day to day."

COMEDY

In a romantic wooded dell on the northeast slopes of Mt. Pentelicus, a short half-day's journey from Athens, lie the scanty remains of a little village which should be the Mecca of all lovers of the drama, for it is the legendary birthplace of both tragedy and comedy. The peasants who now live in this beautiful valley call the place "Dionyso" — a lingering reminiscence of the cult of the wine-god, which had here its most ancient seat in Attica. On this site, something over twenty years ago, enthusiastic young students of the American School at Athens, under the guidance of a distinguished scholar of Columbia University, Professor A. C. Merriam, sought and found the old Attic deme of Icaria, the place where, as tradition says, the hero Icarius once received the god Dionysus into his home. In return for his hospitality Icarius received the gift of the vine. To the inhabitants of Icaria the worship of Dionysus became a priceless heritage. Centuries after the cult was established, it is said that the poet Susarion came from Megara, gathered together a group of Icarians, and organized the first comic chorus — an event which tradition places in the first half of the sixth century before Christ. A half century later, in the year 534, a native of Icaria, Thespis, gave the first tragic performance in Athens, at the newly established spring festival of Dionysus. Once again, when tragedy was being transformed by the master hand of Aeschylus into the most perfect expression of the literary genius of the Greek race, Icaria gave to Athens another of her sons, Magnes; his name stands second among the comic poets who in later times were remembered as hav-

ing contributed notably to the development of Attic Comedy. It is small wonder that, with such traditions and such achievement, this obscure mountain village was credited by the ancients with the unique distinction of having originated the two great branches of the classical drama.

But the tradition which names the birthplace and the earliest poet, or rather chorus-leader, of Attic Comedy, does not tell us the processes and stages by which Comedy came into being and developed into a branch of literature worthy to take its place by the side of its sister, Tragedy. A literary form is not born full-fledged at a particular time and place. It arises out of certain conditions, must go through slow stages of growth, must adjust itself to its environment, and finally receives the perfecting touch of some master artist. If a contemporary had left us a description of the rude performance of Susarion's chorus of Icarians, although some of the lineaments of the Attic Comedy as it is known to us would probably be traceable to the discerning eye, as the zoölogist detects in the embryo the rudiments of the body that is to be born, yet no doubt these lineaments would have been so strangely out of proportion as to seem incapable of being molded into a symmetrical, well-organized body.

We have no complete specimen of the Attic Comedy earlier than the *Acharnians* of Aristophanes, brought out in 425 B.C. Of the Attic predecessors of Aristophanes we possess a few hundred lines quoted from many different plays, none of which, probably, is as early as 450 B.C. Of the great Sicilian poet Epicharmus, who by the united testimony of antiquity is entitled to be called the true founder of a literary comedy among the Greeks, some two hundred lines have come down to us in quotations, together with a number of representative titles of his plays. These carry us back to the early years of the fifth century. From these fragments and from the eleven extant plays of Aristophanes we should not be able to derive much precise information regarding the origins of

this branch of literature. Fortunately, however, we have other sources of information, notably several valuable statements by Aristotle and other Greek writers, comic scenes from early vase-paintings, and figurines of comic performers. With the help of all these, and more particularly by the study of the complex forms of the extant comedies of Aristophanes, in which survivals of early elements have been detected, some progress has been made in recent years toward the solution of the interesting problem of origin, and the region of pure conjecture has been appreciably narrowed.

But the details of this problem, however fascinating for the student of literary history, cannot engage our attention on this occasion, except in so far as an understanding of the beginnings of comedy among the Greeks is essential to our present purpose, which is to give an intelligible account of the character and spirit and permanent achievements of the Attic Comedy at its two great epochs, separated from each other by the space of a century, and represented by the names of Aristophanes and Menander respectively. It should be made apparent in the course of this lecture that the comedy of Aristophanes and his contemporaries, though unique in its kind in the history of literature, though at first view lawless and undisciplined in spirit as in form and structure, was, on the one hand, considered as an organic structure, a direct descendant of the primitive rites and practices that grew up in connection with the worship of Dionysus, and, on the other hand, from the point of view of spirit and content, was the legitimate product of the social and political conditions of the time in which it flourished; furthermore, that the comedy of manners of Menander and his contemporaries, which proved to be one of the greatest contributions of Hellenism to the literature of Europe, in its turn also owed something of its universal character, so strikingly in contrast with the transient and local character of the old political comedy, to the cosmopolitan society in the

midst of which it came into being; and, finally, that the line of descent from the beginning down to Menander is direct and unbroken.

The word "comedy," κωμῳδία, means "comus-song," "the song of the comus." The name itself is modeled on the pattern of "tragedy" — "goat-song" or "the song of the satyrs"; for tragedy developed and received a name earlier than comedy. The comus was an ancient institution in Attica — a band of mirthful revellers who made merry in their own way at the winter festival of Dionysus, at the time when the new wine was broached. Dressed in fantastic costumes, preferably representing themselves as animals — birds, frogs, horses, and the like — they sang impromptu songs accompanied by lively dancing. On their first appearance their leader addressed the bystanders, then the masqueraders sang their songs alternately with the speeches chanted by their leader. At the end of the performance the troupe marched gaily away, led by the flute-player, singing and dancing as they retired.

The chorus of the Old Attic Comedy seems to have developed out of this ancient Dionysiac comus. In the perfected comedy of the period of Aristophanes we see many of the characteristics of the primitive comus: the same masquerade, with a marked predilection for animal masks, the same exuberant vitality revealing itself in both song and dance, the same frankness of appeal to the spectators, the same alternation of speeches on the part of the leaders of the half-choruses with songs by the half-choruses, and the same jolly procession at the close. In the prologue, and in the stasima which separate the several episodes, the influence of tragedy is undoubtedly to be recognized; but the structure which is peculiar to the portion of the play that falls between the prologue and the end of the parabasis, and also the merry revel or ballet of the exodos, bear the unmistakable marks of an independent origin, and this origin has been

found in the comus of masqueraders from which the word "comedy" is derived.[1]

The plot of a typical play of the early period of Aristophanes is generally unfolded by means of the presence upon the scene of two conflicting elements, the representatives of opposing principles. After the situation in which the characters find themselves has been revealed to the spectators in the first part of the prologue, spoken by one or two actors, a plan is suggested by one of the actors, and measures are forthwith taken to put the plan into effect. But the natural march of events is interrupted at the very beginning by the introduction of the opposing element, whether actor or chorus, and this opposition is represented in action as soon as the chorus comes marching in. The opposing principles are brought into collision. A conflict of words or of fists ensues. The chorus is always interested in the struggle, and is often an active participant in it. After a scene of wild excitement, in which each party fights frantically for its cause, there follows a pause in the action. The question at issue is submitted to judicial arbitration. In a lively debate speech is answered by speech, with intercalated jests by a third party, who plays the part of buffoon or clown. A decision is rendered; one or the other side wins. This is the solution of the plot, the true catastrophe of the play. Then follows the parabasis. The actors leave the scene and the chorus marches forward and addresses the spectators. In the first part of the parabasis the chorus leader drops his mask and speaks as the poet's mouthpiece on the poet's life and circumstances, on his ideals and hopes, or on his relations to his rivals and

[1] In a valuable study on "Les origines et la structure technique de la comédie ancienne," which has just appeared in the *Revue des études anciennes* (XIII, 1911, pp. 1 ff.), Professor Octave Navarre submits to a critical discussion the question of the origin of the several parts of the Old Comedy. I am glad to find myself in agreement with him on many essential points, especially as regards the contributions made respectively by the Attic comus and the Sicilian comedy to the composite structure of the Old Comedy.

the public. In the second part of the parabasis the balanced structure which we have seen in the debate which follows the conflict, is again assumed: amoebaeic lyrics by the two half-choruses alternate with balancing recitations by their respective leaders. The mask of the chorus is preserved in this part, the leaders speaking in their characters as wasps, birds, or whatever they and their choruses are conceived to be. After the parabasis comes a succession of short episodes, usually not at all necessary to the plot. A comic person, generally the leading figure in the first part of the play, stands there, always in close touch with the audience, and goes through a series of encounters with a motley variety of persons, who stray in on one pretext or another. It is the poet's way of illustrating in burlesque the advantages of the principle or policy which has gained the upper hand in the preceding conflict.

A play of Aristophanes has been characterized[1] as a "dramatized debate." This description, however, applies only to about one-third of the play. All that precedes the mock conflict and debate is introductory, all that follows — the victors' jollification — is more or less irrelevant horse-play. From the time of its entrance to the end of the parabasis the chorus dominates the scene. But in the loosely connected burlesque scenes which fill the last half of the play the chorus sinks into relative insignificance until the procession at the end, and its mask is no longer significant in the action. Furthermore, the two parts of the play stand out in sharp contrast to each other structurally. The first part is characterized by parallelism in arrangement, natural in a debate, speech answering to speech, ode to ode; the second by a composition similar to that in tragedy, episode following episode with choral songs between. Furthermore, the balanced part uses long tetrameter lines, the episodes the more conversational trimeter. If the paired or double portion, which

[1] Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry*, p. 372.

constitutes the real plot of a play of Aristophanes, is rightly traced back to the masquerading comus of Dionysiac revellers, to what origin shall we ascribe the single or unpaired portion, the loosely attached episodes after the parabasis, which could so readily be spared so far as the plot is concerned?

Scholars have found the answer to this question in the Dorian comedy, especially as it was perfected by the genius of the great Sicilian poet, Epicharmus. Aristotle tells us that the fable or plot was brought into comedy by Epicharmus, and Plato calls him the "prince of comedy," placing him in the same category of archegetes with Homer. Epicharmus flourished about 500 B.C. His fame as a comic poet had spread among the Greeks some time before comedy at Athens had reached a stage of development which entitled it to admission, under the patronage of the state, into the official programme of the great spring festival of Dionysus — an event which is dated about 486 B.C. In the year 485, after his home town of Hyblaean Megara was destroyed, Epicharmus took up his residence in Syracuse. There, in the brilliant court of Hiero, he must have met Pindar, Simonides, Bacchylides, and Aeschylus, and perhaps it was through Aeschylus that the knowledge of his achievement in comedy came to Athens. At any rate his comedy, either then or later, became a formative factor in the development of Attic comedy.

Among the Dorian peoples of the Peloponnesus, where Dionysus was worshiped as the god of fertility, a kind of sport was practised at his festivals which, though similar in some respects to the Attic comus, was in some essential particulars different, and contained the germs of a distinct development. In Corinth and elsewhere men dressed themselves up as goblin-like creatures, their faces stained with wine-lees, their bodies ludicrously padded behind and in front and equipped with obscene appendages. The pictures and descriptions which we have of these grotesque and lusty

followers of Dionysus show that they indulged in boisterous, obscene dances, and suggest that the songs they sang were of like character. We are told, too, that in Sparta were acted improvised character-sketches of comic types taken from daily life. In Megara these performances took on some kind of dramatic form, and during the régime of the democracy there, in the early part of the sixth century, it is probable that political satire became a recognized ingredient of their buffoonery. Tradition says that Susarion, who first organized a comic chorus in Attica, was a native of Megara. However this may be, the ribald exhibition of the imps of Dionysus did not grow into anything literary on the Greek mainland, but only in Southern Italy and in Sicily, whither it was transplanted by Dorian colonists. The mythological travesty in southern Italy and the Atellane farce in the Oscan Campagna are witnesses to the persistence of the so-called "Dorian Comedy" in its new home, and to the Italian Greeks' natural gift for the farce and the burlesque. From the same stock sprang the comedy of Epicharmus toward the end of the sixth century.

The comedy of Epicharmus seems to have been a stage performance from the first, no longer associated with the worship of Dionysus. The subjects which he chose for portrayal were partly mythological — the doings of the gods travestied — and partly taken from daily life. He was the first, for instance, to bring upon the stage typical characters, such as the parasite, the boor, the drunken man. Political satire and personalities seem to have been entirely absent from his plays. The important innovation introduced by Epicharmus was that he transformed a rude and unliterary comedy, which had consisted of a series of disconnected, or at most loosely connected, burlesque scenes, and whose humor lay chiefly in coarse jests and obscenity, into a composition which had at least the essential elements of a literary and artistic form. Aristotle tells us that Epicharmus in-

troduced the fable or myth. This does not necessarily mean that there was a formal complication and a solution, but possibly only that there was at last a certain unity of subject, a more or less orderly progression from one episode to another, so that the comic subject received varied illustration in successive scenes. An important fact is that, to all appearances, there was no chorus in the Sicilian comedy. The goblin-like fun-makers of the Dorian farce or mime were never organized into a band under the direction of a leader, as the members of the Attic comus were welded together into a chorus, but remained individuals. Consequently the structure of a play of Epicharmus was simple — a series of episodes consisting of narration and dialogue, separated from each other, perhaps, by dancing on the part of the actors, but not by choral performances. No trace is preserved of the balanced, double structure which, as we have seen, is the peculiar characteristic of the central or plot portion of a play of Aristophanes. The plot may have been developed by means of a conflict of principles taking the form of a debate; indeed there are traces of this dramatic device in the remains of Epicharmus; but the structure of such debates seems to have resembled the dialogue debate of Attic tragedy rather than that of Attic comedy with its delicate balancing of parts.

From the facts that have been presented the inference is obvious that the Attic comedy of the time of Aristophanes was a composite structure. The choral element was derived from the Attic comus; the balanced structure in monologue, dialogue, and song was due to the interplay of the two half-choruses, the two leaders of the half-choruses, and the leader of the whole chorus. The unpaired element, on the other hand — particularly the loosely connected episodes that follow the parabasis — is of Dorian origin. In fact, there is some reason to think that the actor element, taken by and large, is Dorian. Aristotle tells us that comedy began with improvisations, and originated with the leaders of the phallic

performances. He probably refers to the comus, for though its members did not wear the phallus, yet this emblem was carried in the Dionysiac processions in which the comus participated. But the phallus was a distinctive, characteristic feature of the make-up of the Dionysiac goblins, whose antics gave the impulse which led to the comedy of the Dorians, and it was equally a part of the garb of the actors in the Attic comedy, even in that of Aristophanes and his contemporaries.

It was inevitable that the artistic genius of the Athenians should eventually eliminate from comedy the incongruous elements due to its composite origin, and at the same time should purge it of the frank indecency and unashamed naturalness which were its inheritance from a less conventional civilization. Only by such a process of purgation and of submission to the severe canons of art could a form of literature both universal and of permanent value have been developed out of the Old Attic Comedy.

For a long time the comic performances in Athens were given at the festivals of Dionysus in an entirely unofficial manner, by performers who were volunteers and not the accredited representatives of the state. By the year 486, however, they had assumed such importance in the public eye and had reached such a stage of literary excellence that they were admitted to the programme of the City Dionysia, the great spring festival. From now on comedy steadily increased in importance and improved in technique. The number of poets who devoted themselves to the comic muse grew rapidly. By the admission of comedy into the January festival, the Lenaea, about 442, opportunity was given for the exhibition of ten comedies a year, instead of only five, by as many competing poets — a number that was maintained, with temporary interruptions, throughout the fifth, fourth, and third centuries. From the end of the age of Pericles down to the death of Alexander the Great, *i.e.* from Aris-

tophanes to Menander, comedy did not cease to grow, in response to changing social and political conditions in Athens and to the demands of literary art. We distinguish three great periods: the Old Comedy, from the beginning down to the death of Aristophanes; the Middle Comedy, a transition-period of about fifty years; and the New Comedy, which reached its zenith in Menander.

Attic comedy was not restricted to subjects drawn from mythology, as was tragedy. Any situation in politics or society, any tendency in literature or religion or education or ethics, the foibles of the people or the idiosyncrasies of individuals, the weaknesses of the Olympian gods themselves —in short, any subject which the exuberant fancy of the poets could summon up and turn to account for purposes of burlesque, parody, or satire, made an acceptable theme for the laughter-loving Athenians. We have already referred to the mythological travesty, cultivated by Epicharmus and the Attic poets who were most subject to his influence, in which the heroes of mythology and even the gods were turned to ridicule. Sometimes the mythological travesty was given a political import also, as when Cratinus, in a burlesque upon the judgment of Paris, put Pericles upon the stage under the thin disguise of Dionysus, "the king of satyrs," and charged the scenes in which he appeared with bold innuendo relative to Pericles's relations with Aspasia and with biting witticisms on his public policies. A never-failing source of amusement was furnished by parodies of the tragic poets, with whose plays the comic poet could safely assume a remarkable degree of familiarity on the part of his audience. The extant plays are sprinkled with pathetic lines and touching situations from tragedy, so distorted and put to uses so obviously incongruous as to be irresistibly funny, even to us. Imitations of animal life were much in vogue in the Old Comedy. We hear of choruses of snakes, ants, nightingales, goats, birds, wasps, fishes, and frogs. Again we have choruses of villages,

cities, laws, clouds, seasons, breezes, islands, and transport-ships. These fantastic conceptions were often merely a cloak for political or social satire, as we see in the *Wasps* and *Clouds* of Aristophanes. Another favorite topic was derived from folk-tales — stories about strange lands and peoples; or we are transported to some Utopia, where all good things happen of themselves and everybody is rich and happy; or we are taken back into a long-past golden age, to a primitive state of innocence and happiness; or, as in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, we accompany the hero on an adventurous trip to Hades and witness there the squabbling of the illustrious dead over trivial matters of dramatic composition. A survey of the titles of the lost comedies of the fifth century reveals a great variety of dramatic subjects, and a marvelous ingenuity in finding for the chosen theme a scenic setting that would lend itself to the unfolding of the poet's fancy and at the same time be strikingly original.

The characteristic of the Old Comedy which distinguishes it from that of Epicharmus on the one hand and from the New Comedy on the other — the quality, in fact, which gives it a unique position in the world's literature — is its self-assumed censorship of the political and social life of the period, coupled with a daring in the use of invective, a license in ridiculing institutions and persons, altogether unexampled on the comic stage. This quality can be traced in the earliest fragments of Cratinus, apparently the first comic poet whose plays were preserved to a later period, and it continued with little abatement down to the end of the century. There were plays which were political in warp and woof. There were plays in which political satire and personal lampooning were incidental. But only rarely during this period was a comedy produced in which the poet held himself aloof entirely from contemporary topics and refrained from using the scourge of invective against individuals. The line of division between this political comedy and the Middle Com-

edy which succeeded it was so clearly marked that Aristotle, writing at about the time when the Middle Comedy was passing into the New, could classify the comic poets of the fifth century as "lampooners" and could characterize them as users of coarse and indecent language and violent invective. Except for the form in which they worked, these poets were in spirit more akin to Archilochus, who used his iambics to vent his spleen upon his personal enemies, than to Epicharmus.

Free speech was as the breath of life to the political comedy, and the democratic institutions established by Pericles offered full opportunity for its exercise. During the aristocratic régime that followed the Persian Wars, comedy could hardly have been intensely political, nor is it likely that the right to speak its mind freely about persons and policies was at that time conceded to it. But a new spirit had come over Athens by the time that Pericles became the recognized leader of the popular party. Athens was then committed to the policy of exploiting the empire in her own interests. The body of free citizens had been enormously increased by the indiscriminate extension of the franchise. The eager rivalry of candidates for the popular favor led to a laxer administration of affairs. Pericles, pressed by his rivals, had embraced the dangerous democratic principle of "giving the people their own." A large and increasing number of citizens fed at the public crib. In such a society men had plenty of leisure for politics, and to the masses politics must have been the subject of most absorbing interest. Incidentally, politics was an amusement to them as well as an occupation. When they gathered together in the assembly or loitered in groups about the market-place or the chambers of court, doubtless their gossip played most often about the political events of the day, and their witticisms were levelled at the heads of party leaders and public characters of every sort.

In such an atmosphere, charged with political interest, in

which gossip flourished and freedom of speech was unrestrained, it was inevitable that the comic poets, whose first business was to amuse, should have apprehended the temper of the Athenians and have offered for their amusement what they desired. The poets, in fact, simply adapted to their own use the principle which Pericles was applying to politics, "to give the people their own," to serve up to them the subjects most likely to win their applause — a principle which Dr. Johnson frankly accepted for the playwright in the lines

> The drama's laws the drama's patrons give;
> For we that live to please must please to live.

That the people welcomed the political comedy with open arms is shown, not only by the favors which they showered upon Cratinus, a shameless lampooner and master of invective, but also by their doubling the number of comedies to be exhibited each year. The number was increased from five to ten, as we have seen, by the admission of comedy into the Lenaean festival also. This took place about 442, some ten years after Cratinus had gained his first victory. From this time on the Athenians had their fill twice each year of the yellow journalism of the comic stage, of muck-raking and mud-flinging unchecked by law and untempered by public opinion. Once or twice, indeed, during the next twenty-five years the conviction gained ground that the license of the comic poets should be curtailed, and certain restrictive measures, we are told, were passed by the people. But whatever the scope and intent of these measures, they proved futile. Only after the Athenians had been saddened and sobered by the losses, humiliations, and hardships of a long and devastating war, after the heart had gone out of them, did they submit to forego their annual orgies of scurrility. But during the life of the political comedy it was essentially the rampant people's comedy, its gossip the gossip of the streets, its ridicule of policies and of persons the reflection of

the jokes that circulated daily in the clubs and the gymnasia and other gathering-places.

This conception of the purpose and aim of the Old Attic Comedy is not the traditional view, which has come down to us from antiquity, according to which the comic poets were the scourges of vice, the austere censors of public and private morals, as Horace evidently thought when he wrote: —

> Cratinus, Eupolis, Aristophanes,
> And others of the early comic school,
> When they would brand a man as vagabond,
> Adulterer, bravo, rogue, or otherwise
> Notorious, spoke their minds without restraint.
> (Hovenden.)

Nor yet is it the opinion that has been widely held in modern times — an opinion also inherited from the ancients — that Aristophanes and his fellows were statesmen, men of keen discernment and unflinching courage who cherished exalted ideals for the state and society and made comedy the vehicle for their propaganda.[1] We used to hear, for example, of the "policy" of Cratinus as opposed to that of Pericles, and of the measures advocated by Aristophanes as "the leader of the conservative opposition to Cleon." But shall we not be closing our eyes to the chief purpose of comedy, whose business it is to amuse, and especially to the position of comedy at Athens, where plays were brought out only in competitive exhibitions, in which the poets were bound to

[1] See Professor John Williams White's Introduction to Mr. James Loeb's version of Professor M. Croiset's *Aristophanes and the Political Parties at Athens* for an admirable characterization of the "serious interpretation of a form of literature of which the primary intention must always be entertainment and amusement." It should be noted, however, that Professor White protests against "the mistaken disposition, recently manifested, to regard Aristophanes simply as a jester and to deny that he had any other purpose than to provoke laughter" as "an extreme, though natural, reaction." The reader is referred also to an article by Wilhelm Süss in the *Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum* (1910), pp. 400 ff., on the "Technik der Aristophanischen Komödie."

win the favor of the populace as the condition of success, if we adopt either of these interpretations of the political comedy?[1] And may we not credit the Athenian comic poets with sufficient discernment to have perceived, what all satirists in both literature and art must perceive, that the subject of a caricature, to win instant attention, must be a person more or less prominent in the public eye? Indeed, no other form of ridicule or of comic misrepresentation can count so surely upon achieving immediate success as a clever caricature of an eminent person. A contemporary of Aristophanes, the writer of a shrewd political pamphlet[2] on the Athenian democracy, states as a fact what we might have assumed as a matter of inference: —

> The people do not permit the popular government to be lampooned and vilified, because they do not care to hear themselves vilified. But if anybody desires to lampoon an individual, they give him full leave, well knowing that the object of comic ridicule does not, as a general thing, belong to the people or to the masses. He is rather a man of wealth or of noble birth or of great influence. Very few persons who are poor and of the common classes are made the butt of comedy, and not even these few unless they are meddlesome or seek to have some advantage over the populace.

Lucian (*Piscator* § 25) expresses a similar judgment: —

> Most people are naturally inclined to like satire and ridicule, especially when the things ridiculed pass for noble and stately. For example, they used to be delighted with Aristophanes and

[1] Since these words were written an interesting sketch of the "Early Attic Comedy and its Bearings upon Political and Social Life at Athens" (Presidential Address delivered before the Classical Association of Ireland on Feb. 9, 1911) has come into my hands by the courtesy of its author, Mr. W. J. M. Starkie. The distinguished editor of the *Wasps*, the *Acharnians* and the *Clouds* takes essentially the same view of the political comedy as that presented above. Cf. "Aristophanes was a comic poet whose function it was to excite laughter, to crystallize the gossip that passed from mouth to mouth at Athens" (p. 12); "It was not the function of the comic poet to be just, but to excite laughter" (p. 23).

[2] The Pseudo-Xenophontic *Polity of the Athenians*, § 18.

Eupolis when they brought Socrates on the scene to make mock of him. . . . These jests counted as a part of the festival of the god, and very likely the god enjoyed them too, for he is a laughter-loving god.

But the best testimony is that which the comic poets themselves furnish. Aristophanes no doubt does pose as a reformer, as a censor of morals, as a sage adviser, and as a benefactor of the people.[1] It is the pose habitual to the satirist, a part of his stock in trade. As for the moral effect of the ribald jokes and obscene buffoonery of our Athenian reformer, the less said the better. They are not vicious, it is true, and were perhaps not dangerous to the morals of the average Athenian of the day, but their tendency cannot be regarded as elevating or edifying, and the poet himself does not pretend that it was. The indecency which he severely reproves in one play he blithely practises in his next comedy. He attacks the vicious, it is true, but he assails also the innocent, and with equal venom. And as for praise, he reserves that, with rare exceptions, for the dead. In denouncing Cleon and the leaders of the popular party who succeeded Cleon we may concede that the poet was actuated by a serious patriotic purpose; he certainly vilifies and vituperates them with a hearty good will. We may even grant that he was a genuine conservative in politics, if it is worth while to classify him at all. But we must not forget that the political doctrines of the comic poets are likely to be negatively expressed, and dressed up with buffoonery so extravagant and jokes so obviously prepared as always to raise a question as to their seriousness. This half-serious, half-jesting attitude could not be better expressed than by the words of Aristophanes himself. In one of his appeals (*Peace* 764) for a favorable verdict upon his play he defines the whole duty of the comic poet thus: "to have caused little

[1] Cf. Starkie, *l.c.*, p. 7: "Ostensibly, the poets profess to be apostles attempting to convert."

vexation and given much pleasure," and again (*Eccl.* 1154) he urges his wisdom and his jollity combined: —

> But first a slight suggestion to the judges:
> Let the wise and philosophic choose me for my wisdom's sake,
> Those who joy in mirth and laughter choose me for the jests I make;
> Then with hardly an exception every vote I'm bound to win.
> (Rogers.)

To the ancients Aristophanes represented the culmination of the Old Comedy. They saw in his dramas a harmonious blending of all the dramatic and poetic qualities of his predecessors and contemporaries. In this judgment we who are not in a position to make the comparison may acquiesce. His work stands as the type of the class to which it belonged, of a comedy which is unique in the history of literature because it arose in conditions which have never been repeated and could not, in the nature of the case, be repeated. And besides, Aristophanes was a genius, a creator of exceptional imaginative and poetical power. He rose above the form in which he worked and made of it a fit vehicle for his abounding fancy, his gift of caricature, his inexhaustible humor, and his rare lyrical powers. His plays are essentially dramatic, full of action. His plots are simple — even rudimentary if compared with those of tragedy or the later comedy. He seizes upon a single idea capable of ludicrous representation and demonstrates it before our eyes in the persons of his fellow-citizens. There is little use of the delicate technique created by the legitimate drama, the technique of complications, delays, recognitions, solutions. Nor does the poet who travesties human affairs and human kind set before him as an indispensable means to his art the faithful portrayal of character. Comic exaggeration in character painting is common to all comedy in dealing with certain types, but in the topsyturvy world of Aristophanes, while typical characters, like the slave, the Athenian woman, and the rustic, are hu-

morously overdrawn, yet the characters taken from real life, like Lamachus, Cleon, Socrates, and Euripides, are outrageously distorted, as the spirit of burlesque demands. As a dramatist Aristophanes was first of all a fun-maker. The remarkable thing is that his genius as a literary artist rises so conspicuously above the buffoonery imposed upon him by tradition. His verse and language are irreproachable, and through them breathes a charm all his own. Plato sums up this quality in him in his epigram: —

> The Graces sought a heavenly shrine which ne'er
> Should come to naught.
> And in thy soul, immortal poet, found
> The shrine they sought.
> (Rogers.)

During the half-century following the death of Aristophanes comedy underwent a gradual change in both form and spirit. The Old Comedy, as we have seen, had cared little for the niceties of plot-construction, for the blending of the parts into an artistic whole. The chorus, inherited from the old Attic comus, had indeed been skilfully used to enhance the spectacle. Its numbers added materially to the animation of the action. But its presence seriously interfered with the dramatic proprieties, and illusion was often thrown to the winds. In the latest plays of Aristophanes we see the beginning of a change in structure. The parabasis has disappeared, and the part of the chorus has been cut down. At the end of the period of transition, in the plays of the New Comedy, the chorus appears only between acts, to furnish entertainment and diversion for the spectators by dancing and singing while the scene is clear of actors. It is still conceived of as a comus, however — a band of revellers, banqueters, wedding-guests, and the like, who come into the scene of action on some pretext furnished by the occasion. With the disappearance of the chorus from the dialogue and action, the old balanced structure which was so remarkable

a feature of the Old Comedy also disappears. The structure of the play once more becomes episodic, as it was in the contemporary tragedy and as it had been in comedy at the time of Epicharmus. But for the presence of a chorus between the acts, a play of the New Comedy is very similar in composition to a modern play, consisting of prologue, exposition, and a succession of acts divisible into scenes, each conducing to the development and solution of the plot. The place of action, however, remained the same throughout a play, as in the days when the constant presence of the chorus made difficult the shifting of the scene. The absence of the chorus during the dialogue also encouraged the use of the soliloquy or monologue, which plays an important rôle in the New Comedy.

We can no longer trace in detail the influences which brought about these structural changes, which transformed a local and transient burlesque drama, peculiar to the time and circumstances, into a comedy of manners, universal in form and spirit. The influence of tragedy, especially that of Euripides, has been thought to have been a potent, if not a controlling, factor. However this may be, the change in spirit which came over comedy is to be ascribed, in part at least, to the changed political, social, and intellectual conditions at Athens. The Peloponnesian War had shattered the imperialistic aspirations of the Athenians, had broken the spirit of the extreme democracy, had directed the attention of the people more to their internal affairs, had tempered the violence of party strife, and paved the way for an improved, if less confident and aggressive, social and political life. A second critical epoch was the overthrow of Athenian freedom by Philip and Alexander, which brought in the thoughtful and refined cosmopolitan society that characterized the end of the fourth century. These events did not violently interrupt the normal growth of comedy, but only

hastened a process that had already made notable headway.

Aristotle, writing at about the time when the New Comedy was taking shape, remarks that the poet Crates, who was of the generation preceding Aristophanes, had initiated an important change in the spirit of the Old Comedy, following the example of Epicharmus. He had put aside the lampooning of individuals and had "generalized" his plots. The kind of mirth which the other poets excited was essentially malicious, for it involved the discomfiture of another. A higher form of humor is that which derives pleasure from the frailities and foibles of human nature in general, and in such a way as not to inflict pain. In another passage Aristotle draws attention to a difference between the Old Comedy and that of his time in the matter of refinement and good taste. The coarse obscenity habitual to the former has given way to delicate innuendo. The remains of the Middle and New Comedy which have come down to us bear witness to the justice of these observations. The element of personal satire does not, indeed, die wholly out. The poets still occasionally take a fling at individuals — at the philosophers, the poets, the courtesans, and the man about town. But the tone is that of light badinage rather than of venomous denunciation. Furthermore, the grotesque and indecent costume of the comic actors of the earlier period has also disappeared. So far as we can judge, the men and women of the New Comedy are dressed as persons in ordinary life. The mirror which the poet holds up to nature is no longer the concave mirror.

If the comic poets of the new age were constrained to quit the field of politics and personal satire in choosing their subjects, they found before them, practically uncultivated by their predecessors, the most fertile field of all — human nature and society. A nearer approach to real life is early detected in the Middle Comedy in the more frequent and extensive use of stock characters, such as the loquacious cook,

the blustering soldier, and the grovelling parasite. But the transition was gradual. Before the ideal was realized toward which the comic poets were groping — the faithful representation of contemporary life and manners — attempts were made in other directions. In particular, the mythological travesty came into vogue once more. The stories of the births, marriages, banquets, and gallant adventures of the gods were humorously depicted, as in the comedy of Epicharmus. This kind of subject had been employed throughout the Old Comedy, but generally, if not always, as a framework for political satire. It now becomes, instead of the fantastic political allegory, in which Pericles and Aspasia, for example, were seen under transparent masks, more nearly an allegory of human life, disclosing the types of mankind in the figures of the humanized Olympians. Except for the supernatural element in it, the Amphitruo, which Plautus has taken from the Greek, resembles the comedy of domestic life: Mercury, except for his name, is a typical intriguing slave. In fact, we may suspect that the mythological comedy was the bridge by which comedy passed from the particular to the universal, from the study of the ludicrous and grotesque in the individual to that of the universal qualities which make the life of our fellowmen always interesting and generally amusing. Mythology furnished the situations and the names, contemporary society the ethical traits. It was only a short step to that complete universality at which, as Aristotle remarks, poetry aims, and which, he tells us, was achieved in comedy when the "poet first constructs his plot on the lines of probability and then inserts characteristic names." A fragment from a play of Antiphanes, a poet of the Middle Comedy, not only illustrates this statement of Aristotle, but shows us how much importance the poets of the transition were already ascribing to the construction of the plot. The tragic poets, Antiphanes complains, have an easy task. A hint, a name like Oedipus,

and the audience is in possession of the whole story. He continues: —

> Then when they're stalled for words and in their plots
> Are absolutely stuck, they simply raise
> Their god-machine, as one his finger lifts,
> And thus with the spectators square themselves.
> But we have none of this in comedy.
> The plots entire our wits must needs invent,
> New names devise, the antecedent tale,
> The present circumstances, dénouement,
> The exposition. Then, if there's a slip
> In Chremes' or in Pheidon's part, — for all
> That Peleus or a Teucer might commit
> Such faults at will — they hiss us from the stage!

The poets of the New Comedy dispensed with mythological subjects, just as the Middle Comedy had renounced the political. They had discovered that human conduct and the play of human motives were more real and more entertaining than the doings of the legendary figures of a remote past. Furthermore, the element of the supernatural disappears almost entirely. Sometimes, it is true, a god or an abstraction, like "Misapprehension," is introduced in the prologue or in the exposition, but only to explain the antecedent and present circumstances of the characters, not to interfere with their freedom of action. In limiting their themes to contemporary life the poets concentrate their attention more closely upon the faithful delineation of character, the study of the motives of conduct, and upon the construction of the plot, with its delays and surprises. They gave a "mirror of life," *speculum vitae*, and particularly of those aspects of life that reveal the familiar frailties of mankind. The object of the Old Comedy was to excite laughter, even malicious laughter, by a portrayal of the ridiculous; therefore it dealt with characters worse than the average, as contrasted with tragedy, which chose persons better than the average. The

New Comedy portrayed average characters, men like ourselves; its aim was mild amusement combined with edification. The spectators should recognize their own kinship with the men and women represented on the scene, and while they might laugh at their imperfections and follies, they should at the same time feel the touch of sympathy. In such a comedy pathos obviously has its place as well as humor. Except for the comic poet's humorous view of human affairs and his exaggeration of individual traits in order to heighten his comic effects, there is not a great difference between the Greek comedy of manners at its best and the tragedy of Euripides, whose realism tended to reduce his characters to the common level, and who often, like the poet of comedy, brought his plays to a happy ending.

Without attempting to describe the variety of motives employed in this comedy, one element must be signalized because it, above all the rest, establishes the kinship of the New Comedy with modern romantic literature — I mean the passion of love. Almost every play of this period has its love story, or is a love story. Ovid says of Menander: —

fabula iucundi nulla est sine amore Menandri.

Sometimes it is the love of a man for his wife, more often degraded love; but very often the disinterested and tender attachment of a young man and maiden. And it is this love, put to the test by some external circumstance that interrupts the course of love, such as the objection of parents, a difference in social position, a misunderstanding, that brings out the true character of the lovers and clothes them with individual traits.[1] Love scenes, however, are rarely placed before the eyes of the spectators. Frequently the girl has not even a speaking part in the play. As a consequence our interest is less in the persons themselves than in the working

[1] Cf. the observations of M. Croiset in the *Revue des deux mondes*, 1909, pp. 23 ff.

out of their problem of happiness, more in the surprises of the plot than in the purely personal fortunes of the lovers. In this respect there is a wide difference between the New Comedy and the modern romance, due in considerable measure to the difference between the Athenian habit of mind and that of the modern theatre-goer or reader. The novel and drama of to-day appeal to a public that can hardly be compared with the Athenian public of the time of Menander in respect of training in accurate observation, of knowledge of ethical traits, and of imagination habituated to the portrayal in dramatic form of fictitious stories based upon human experience.

The New Comedy reached its highest point in Menander, who brought out his first play, at the age of eighteen years, in 324 B.C., the year before the death of Alexander the Great. He died in the year 291. In his career of thirty-three years he exhibited over one hundred plays. The after world with one accord recognized in him the unapproachable master of comedy, the exquisite flower of Attic poesy. The great critic, Aristophanes of Byzantium, exclaimed, "O Menander and Life, which of you imitated the other?" Until a few years ago modern criticism had to content itself with the judgment of antiquity, for no play of Menander had survived except in the adaptations of Plautus and Terence. The numerous quotations from his plays found in ancient writers preserved many charming bits of moralizing, gem-like aphorisms, and observations on life both humorous and grave. All this, combined with the enthusiastic admiration of antiquity, sufficed to convince the modern world that time had robbed it of a priceless heritage, but not to reveal to us the qualities of Menander's genius or the basis of his fame. But in the past fifteen years the sands of Egypt have restored to us considerable portions of this poet. We may now form for ourselves a fair idea of his style, of the general lines of his plots, and of the qualities of his dramatic art.

This is not the occasion, however, for the presentation of an analysis and estimate of Menander's art in the light of these new discoveries. The consensus of opinion to-day seems to be that the testimony of antiquity regarding him is unimpeachable. Has the judgment of the best writers of Greece and Rome in their appraisement of literary values ever been found seriously at fault? Without dwelling, then, upon details, we may appropriately bring to a close this survey of the history of Greek comedy by indicating briefly the position which Menander occupies in relation to his predecessors and in relation to the later world.

Menander summed up the experience in the observation of life and in the practice of the dramatic art of the two centuries which preceded him, and this not simply because he was the last of the marvelous line of great poets, but also and chiefly because of what he was. By birth and education an Athenian of the Athenians, he inherited the most refined Attic culture. He was trained in the contemporary philosophy and rhetoric. One of these had inculcated the close observation of life, had analyzed the motives of human action, and had defined the ethical qualities by which characters are distinguished; the other had reduced to precepts the art of representing appropriately the speech of every variety of individual. Philosophy had also applied itself to the principles of the dramatic art, considered both as the art of imitating men in action in given situations, and as the art of plot-construction. The practical application of all this body of theory, with which Menander was familiar, was found in the law-courts and in the theatre. Menander knew well the applied rhetoric of the law courts. The Attic orators from Lysias down supply an abundant commentary on the character-speeches in his plays. Indeed, Quintilian (10. 1, 69) goes so far as to say, for the guidance of the future orator, that, in his judgment, "the diligent study of Menander alone suffices as a training in all the pre-

cepts of oratory, so truly does he reproduce the complete image of life, there is in him such fertility of invention and easy grace of expression, and so readily does he adapt himself to all situations, characters, and moods." But especially on the side of the drama was Menander's competence the result of discipline and of experience. His practical teacher in the playwright's art was his uncle Alexis, one of the most distinguished comic poets of the Middle and New Comedy. But his inspiration he derived from the kindred spirit of Euripides, who had sounded the depths of human experience as no other Greek poet had done. And finally Menander saw life for himself, with his own eyes. He was a man of the world, not a recluse. As an eminent French critic has recently said:[1] "It seems that Athens, at the moment when her historic destinies were drawing to a close, had, as it were, gathered up and concentrated in this charming spirit the finest essence of her genius and all that was most human in her tradition."

But Menander was more than the last great poet of Athens; he was the first great poet of Hellenism. It was through Hellenism that Greek culture was destined to be diffused throughout the Mediterranean civilization. Hellenism had a wider outlook and a broader sympathy than Athens. The spirit of Athens as revealed in her earlier comedy was circumscribed and parochial, while that of Hellenism was essentially cosmopolitan. The Old Attic Comedy could not possibly be dissociated from the social and political conditions in which it arose. "The great ideas of Hellenism," on the other hand, to quote the words of Professor Butcher,[2] "disengage themselves from the local and accidental influences and make their appeal to a universal human sentiment." In this sense Menander's comedies were typically Hellenistic. The New Comedy as represented in him dis-

[1] Maurice Croiset, *Revue des deux mondes*, 1909, p. 5.
[2] *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry*, p. 373.

carded the elements which had limited the scope and influence of the earlier Greek comedy. By two centuries of experimentation there had been wrought out an artistic structure, characterized by unity of the whole combined with harmony of the parts, that left little room for succeeding ages to improve upon. The appropriate subject-matter for a universal comedy of manners had been discovered. The faithful portrayal of life in a spirit of broad sympathy for all that is human, with room for both smiles and tears, had been established as the comic poet's ideal. The literatures of Rome and modern Europe bear witness to the qualities of universality and permanence in the New Comedy of Athens and of its greatest representative, Menander.

EDWARD CAPPS.

HISTORY

When Alexander the Great crossed into Asia on his long career of conquest, he took a trained historian with him. He was conscious of making history of which men after him would be glad to read. But many centuries of Greek history found no recording historians. They would have been interesting to us, who are so absorbed in origins and developments, in causality and evolution, in "historical relativity," that we begrudge oblivion any data whatsoever. But they were not interesting enough to contemporary Greeks to find chroniclers. Speaking broadly, it always required some great spectacular struggle — the Trojan War, the Persian Wars, the Peloponnesian War, the duel between Sparta and Thebes, the Hellenic conquest of Asia — to elicit, as it were, a great historian; and Homer, Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, and Cleitarchus are the canonical names corresponding to these spectacular struggles. There are others, of course, but these tower above all, and the others are usually little more than names to us. Polybius also was moved to compose his great work by the transcendent struggle tween Rome and Carthage; but Polybius, though writing in Greek, had become, by long residence in Rome, and intimate association with leading Romans, more than half Roman in spirit. Not forgetting the sensational Duris of Samos, nor the learned antiquarian Timaeus of Tauromenium, we may say that distinctively Greek historiography ends with the historians of Alexander's career. And it ends, as it begins, with a triumph of fancy and invention over fact and re-presentation. In the middle ground, in Thucydides

and Xenophon, the desire to inform is duly enthroned beside the desire to please; but the Greek hearer or reader usually preferred a flight of the imagination to a statement of the truth, and the sovereign names among the Greeks themselves were Homer, Herodotus, Ephorus, and Cleitarchus, names representing a body of highly imaginative and mainly fictitious poetry, and a body of highly imaginative and largely fictitious prose.

Well on into that greatest century of Greek life and thought which began five hundred years before Christ, the Homeric poems, and especially the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, were regarded by most Greeks as authentic history. Achilles, Agamemnon, Andromache, Odysseus, Laertes, and Penelope had actually and in very person fought, ruled, suffered, wandered, grieved, and been steadfast to the end, even as they are there described. Thersites had railed at the Atreidae, Diomedes had wounded Aphrodite, Hector had slain Patroclus, Achilles had slain Hector, and aged Priam had ransomed the dead body of his son, even as we now read in the *Iliad*. Ilios, the proud city of the Troad, commanding the Hellespont and the Euxine Sea, had been captured and sacked by the leagued hosts of the Lord of Mycenae, a city which dominated Peloponnesus, and the hosts had met with various dooms on their various ways home. All this had long been history to the Greeks, just as the book of Genesis has long been history to Christian peoples. Skepticism, doubt, and denial met with the same scornful reproaches in the first case which they have evoked in the second. We now know — at least Professor Murray, and those who think approximately as he does, know — that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are traditional race-poems,[1] slowly evolved through the centuries which saw tribes of hardy Northerners sweep gradually down into the Aegean basin and appropriate by conquest and assimilation the rich culture existing there.

[1] Gilbert Murray, *The Rise of the Greek Epic*, 2d ed., Oxford, 1911.

The ruins which amaze the discoverer at Troy, Cnossus, Mycenae, and Orchomenus speak impressively of the power and splendor of that submerged culture.

The invaders were a song-folk. They sang because they had to sing. They sang of the achievements and adventures of their gods and heroes. One generation of them would become heroes and demigods to the next generation, and that generation to the next, and each sang of the prowess of the past. A traditional poesy arose, shot through with "a fiery intensity of imagination," and served by a language "more gorgeous than Milton's, yet as simple and direct as that of Burns." Into the crucible of this traditional poesy were poured for centuries the migrations and conquests of tribes; the oversea expeditions of thalassocratic cities; racial myths and legends. Into the crucible went also the absolute fictions of a powerfully creative imagination laboring at high pressure to supply a keen demand. The centre of poetic activity shifted from the European to the Asiatic side of the Aegean, and from Aeolians to Ionians. Guilds of poets flourished in the chief Ionian cities, who slowly fashioned the molten material from the great crucible of epic poesy into the definite structures of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and then went on to complete in later compositions the epic cycle which the elder epics logically and chronologically demanded. If material was lacking, the gap was filled by fresh creation until the cycle was complete, and then the epic impulse slowly died. These later epics, ascribed to individual and historical poets, have perished. But the central poems around which they had been made to cluster assumed canonical form for use in national religious festivals, and finally passed, with all the other rich fruits of Ionian culture, across the sea again, flying before the conquering power of Persia, to Ionian Athens. There they found the patronage of a rich tyrant's brilliant court, and there they were learnedly and skilfully edited into substantially the shape in which they

have come down to us. At national religious festivals they were recognized as national religious poems, and as national history. The mythical, legendary, and purely fictitious accretions in them were seldom distinguished from the genuinely historical *nuclei*. They were thought to be the work of one man, a divine Homer. And yet they actually "represent not the independent invention of one man, but the ever moving tradition of many generations of men. They are wholes built up out of a great mass of legendary poetry, re-treated and re-created by successive poets in successive ages, the histories knitted together and made more interesting to an audience by the instinctive processes of fiction." [1]

> When 'Omer smote 'is bloomin' lyre,
> He'd 'eard men sing by land and sea;
> An' what he thought 'e might require,
> 'E went and took — the same as me!

Multiply Kipling's blithe "'Omer" many times, and distribute him through five or six centuries, and you have the Homer of Professor Murray, my Homer, your Homer — perhaps.

But besides the Homeric poems, Ionia also produced a scientific spirit, which looked out on life observantly, and drew inferences from it which were fatal to a belief in the truth of those poems. It is characteristic of this period of scientific inquiry, as Professor Bury has remarked,[2] that sages take the place of heroes in popular fancy, or, at least, take a place beside them, and we have the myths of the Seven Wise Men. Great historical personages also loom up from the near past, like Polycrates, Periander, and Croesus, about whom fiction weaves its fascinating web. The advance of the Persian power from the Orient to the Aegean, and its spectacular conquests of the Lydian dynasty first and then of the

[1] Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 154. (2d ed., p. 189.)
[2] J. B. Bury, *The Ancient Greek Historians*, New York, 1909.

Asiatic Greeks, made near and current events even more attractive to the Greek fancy than what were supposed to be the real events of the Homeric poems, or what the new scientific spirit denounced as the falsehoods of those poems. Truth, for a season at least, became stranger and more fascinating than fiction. The geography and peoples of the Orient were brought home to the Greek fancy by Hecataeus; the story of that all-conquering folk, the Persians, by Xanthus the Lydian and Dionysius of Miletus. That story soon included the invasions of Europe by Darius and Xerxes, and the splendor of the story, even without the exaggerations which the lively Greek fancy was sure to give it, made the undertakings and achievements of the heroic age far less impressive than they had been. In time, Thucydides could allude to them with something of scorn. To put it briefly, the new critical spirit brought the truth of the Greeks' Ancient History, as it was presented in the Homeric poems, into doubt and disbelief, and the Modern History of the Greeks became so fascinating that it absorbed the active imagination of the race.

But the Ancient History of the Greeks never emancipated itself wholly from the influence of the epic poems. The revolt against it which we see in the chronological and didactic poems of Hesiod, poems which were to tell men the truth in contrast to the falsehoods of Homer, is still expressed in the same hexameter verse. And even the later mythographers, or logographers, such as Acusilaus, who retold the epic legends in prose, merely lifted the myths to a slightly higher level of credibility by naïve rationalistic processes. The myths were not rejected, nor even approximately reduced to their historical meanings. The earliest rulers among men were still directly descended from gods, and a clumsy chronology by successive generations was made to show the connection of the great families of the present with these early demigods. Even Hellanicus, who established the first annual system of

chronology for current events, and tabulated those of so late a period as the close of the Peloponnesian War, incorporated into his Attic History, to which Thucydides alludes, this clumsy fabric of Ancient History. It is Thucydides who first cuts adrift from it. And this gives us the succession of writers who sought by what they wrote to inform rather than to please: to tell the truth, to tell of what really was, rather than of what never was: Hesiod, Acusilaus, Hellanicus, Thucydides, all devoted to fact more than to form. Each in turn, it is true, accuses his predecessor of falsehood, Hesiod Homer, Acusilaus Hesiod, and so on down the line. This is one of the curious amenities of Greek historiography.[1] But each is honestly in quest of the truth rather than of a pleasing form of the truth at the expense, it may be, of the truth. And Hellanicus attains his quest with a tabulation of the chief events in contemporary Greek history, first as they are related to the years of the priestesses of Hera in the temple at Argos, and then, after these sacred records had perished in the destruction of the temple by fire, as they are related to the annual archons of Athens, now an imperial Greek city.[2] His work was an "annals," in the strictest sense, and could have had no particular unity — no plan, culmination, or conclusion. It afforded not only no room for play of fancy, but none either for any artistic impulses. It was a catalogue of events by years of Athenian archons.

But meanwhile the really colossal events and personages of the Persian Wars, after being more or less fully recorded from the standpoint of Asiatic Greeks by Charon of Lampsacus, Xanthus the Lydian, Dionysius, and Hecataeus of Miletus, had also been committed to the processes of oral tradition, among a people of the liveliest fancy, from whom had come, by slow evolution, two of the greatest imaginative poems which the world has known. The wonders of Egypt

[1] *American Journal of Philology*, XVIII (1897), pp. 255–274.
[2] *American Journal of Philology*, XXII (1901), pp. 39–43.

and Assyria, the marvels of India and Arabia, the mysteries of Upper Asia and Scythia, had been brought by travellers and merchants within the reach and play of the lively Hellenic fancy. Wonderful facts and wondering fancy had ministered to each other for more than half a century, during which time a great Athenian empire had arisen, and the Age of Pericles had begun. Books were rare, but tales were rife, and there were professional tellers of prose tales as well as professional reciters of epic song. Written and oral material of tradition together made a thesaurus of fact and fancy before whose glowing charm even the epic cycle paled, and these bewildering treasures were reduced to splendid literary form by him who is called the "Father of History," Herodotus.

Though born in Dorian Halicarnassus, and long resident in Ionian Samos and the Pan-Hellenic Thurii of Magna Graecia; though a traveller in all the parts of Asia, Africa, and Europe where Hellenes came into touch with Barbarians, Athens was his spiritual home, the Athens of Pericles. Here his immortal work, the materials for which had been slowly accumulating during more than thirty years of the most kaleidoscopic experience, was given at last the form in which it has come down to us. It was edited and published, as we should say, during the first decade of the Peloponnesian War, in Athens, probably, and for Athenians — at least in fullest sympathy with the imperial ambitions of Athens. It gives high artistic form to the reigning beliefs of the Periclean party at Athens concerning the Persian Wars, two generations of men after the wars were fought, and one generation after the greatest hero of those wars, Themistocles, had died. Meanwhile the oral tradition of those wars — and the literary tradition was annalistic and meagre — had suffered the changes to which all oral tradition is naturally liable, and, besides, had been directly influenced by an entirely new set of loves and hates and jealousies arising from the growth of the Athenian empire and the outbreak of the

Peloponnesian War. These tended to distort and pervert the stories of services to the national cause rendered by states now in hostile relations with Athens, and to glorify the services of Athens. So far as Herodotus writes history, he writes it as a defender of Athens and the Periclean policies which had led to the Peloponnesian War. He belittles the Ionian Greeks of Asia and their heroic but ineffectual struggle for freedom; he treats Sparta with ironical depreciation; Corinth, Aegina, and Thebes with contemptuous hate; Argos and Macedonia, with whom Athens hopes yet to come into alliance, with tender respect. He does this, as Professor Bury says (*op. cit.*, p. 65), as "a historian who cannot help being partial," rather than as "a partisan who becomes a historian for the sake of his cause." And he does it at a time when, as Thucydides says (ii, 8, *fin.*, Jowett's translation), "the feeling of mankind was strongly on the side of the Lacedaemonians, and the general indignation against the Athenians was intense." We cannot take the word of Herodotus in explanation of Sparta's defense of Thermopylae, or of the stratagem of Themistocles at Salamis, or of the tactics of Pausanias at Plataea, although what he says enables us to penetrate to the truth in these matters. For he mirrors the sentiments of the community in the midst of which he writes. And this is his precise worth as a historian. We know through him what Periclean Athens liked to think and feel on these and other points.

"So far as Herodotus writes history," was said above; for that is the least of what he does. He is a collector, on a vast scale, of historical material, and an incomparable artist in reducing this heterogeneous material to coherent and attractive literary form in an age when the footnote was unknown. Geographical, ethnological, mythological, genealogical, legendary, political, military, literary, economic, architectural, and religious data, in both genuine and fictitious sort, have been strung by him in bewildering profusion

along one continuous thread— the strife between Hellenes and Barbarians from earliest times down to the capture of Sestos by the Athenians in 479. This greater theme, which gives his work the character of a universal history, was probably suggested to him by the narrower theme of Xerxes' invasion of Europe; after he had treated this, he probably elaborated the larger subject. This narrower theme occupies the third triad of the nine books into which his history has been conveniently divided — books VII, VIII, and IX — and I am willing to admit, with Mr. Macan,[1] though I do not think the argument for it can ever be made perfectly convincing, that these three books were "the earliest portion, or section, of the work to attain relative completeness and definite form." They certainly constitute a distinct whole by themselves, progressively climactic in the stories of Thermopylae, Salamis, and Plataea, and they lend themselves to subdivision far less than the first six, or the first two triads of books. Mr. Macan well says that "no other equal portion of the work of Herodotus exhibits so remarkable a coherence, continuity, and freedom from digression, interruption, or asides as this the third and last volume, or trio, of books."

In all the books, but especially in the last three, Herodotus is not a historian in the strict sense of the term — not as Hellanicus and Thucydides are historians. He does not seek by investigation to sift the true from the false and tell for all subsequent time what actually happened. He rather seeks to cast the vast material which he has collected on the narrower theme of Xerxes' invasion and the larger theme of the strifes between Hellene and Barbarian into such shape as is prescribed by the canons of epic and dramatic poetry, the two regnant forms of literary art, but to do this in prose. He is the prose Homer, and to some extent the prose Aeschylus, of the thesaurus of fact and fancy constituted by the oral and written tradition of what was to him modern and recent,

[1] R. W. Macan, *Herodotus*, Books VII–IX, London, 1908.

as contrasted with ancient and mythical time. His was the genius first to perceive that modern history in prose was capable of epic and dramatic treatment, especially of epic treatment. Comprehensive discursiveness is the breath of his nostrils. The tales which Hellenes and Barbarians have told with or without pertinency, the marvels they have seen, the divine judgments they have illustrated, the wealth they have amassed, the crimes they have committed, their intrigues, loves, hates, and sorrows — these and more than these are welcome to Herodotus, and if he does not find them in sufficient abundance, then like a true Homeric poet he invents or adapts to suit himself. It is often hard to distinguish what he invents from what he merely accepts, and it often matters little, acceptance or invention being alike heinous from the standpoint of the true historian. Credulity alternates in his work with reserve, and both are often childish. He has lost his faith in the gods and heroes of Homer, for he has travelled in Egypt; but he has the most implicit confidence in oracles, and often warps his story to prove fulfilment of them. He borrows largely from a predecessor like Hecataeus, and pays him no thanks but ridicule. Andrew Lang's priest in the City of the Ford of the Ox, who called Herodotus in the tongue of the Arabians "The Father of Liars," said that he "was chiefly concerned to steal the lore of those who came before him, such as Hecataeus, and then to escape notice as having stolen it." But all this simply emphasizes anew the fact that Herodotus was the prose Homer of the Persian Wars. Like Homer, he charmed his hearers and will always charm his readers. It was this charm which Thucydides could not forgive him. But Thucydides despised Homer. Those who do not despise Homer, but are edified by the play of fancy about fact, will agree with what Dionysius of Halicarnassus says about Herodotus (*Epist. ad Pomp.*, 3, cited by Bury, p. 42): "Herodotus knew that every narrative of great length wearies the ear of the

hearer, if it dwell without a break on the same subject; but, if pauses are introduced at intervals, it affects the mind agreeably. And so he desired to lend variety to his work and imitated Homer. If we take up his book, we admire it to the last syllable, and always want more."

But it is a literary, not a scientific, enjoyment which Herodotus affords us. We know that the panorama of the peoples and tribes of three continents which he unrolls for us is colored by the fancy of the Greeks. Greek ideas and reflections are transferred to an Oriental or Barbarian setting. We can hardly find in Herodotus what Assyria, Babylonia, Lydia, Libya, Scythia, and Egypt really were in the sixth century B.C., but rather how they mirrored themselves in the Greek imagination. It is as though we had to reconstruct for ourselves a mountain range from its distorted reflections in the bosom of a lake. In this case, however, the distorted reflection has been brought into natural perspective for us by one of the greatest literary artists of the race. He had the genius to see, what is so easy for us now to see, that Salamis and Plataea were points towards which all previous Mediterranean history converged, and from which all subsequent Mediterranean history must diverge. To have had this vision first, establishes his right to be called "The Father of History."

It was the attempt of the Oriental Persian Empire to conquer the Aegean basin which engaged the Homeric genius of Herodotus; Thucydides depicts the struggle of Athens to maintain her empire of this Aegean basin, and he does it as a contemporary and participant. An imperial democracy was a new thing in the world's experience, as was also the historical treatment of contemporary events. Current events had been chronicled in time-relations merely by Hellanicus, but Thucydides was the first to apply to them the laws of cause and effect, and, whatever his excellences or defects, he was the founder of historical science as we now

understand it, the creator of historical criticism, the discoverer of its laws, and the first teacher of the art of writing history. He whom many hold to be the greatest modern historian of antiquity, Eduard Meyer, calls him the incomparable and unequalled teacher of this art, but there are strong voices of dissent from such high praise. Those who dissent often fail to consider sufficiently the exceedingly narrow limits which Thucydides imposed upon himself; and those who agree with and echo the praise are often blind to the inadequacies of Thucydides, even within his self-imposed limits. Professor Bury, in his Harvard Lectures, seems to draw the lines with dignity and justice.

"Thucydides, an Athenian," so begins the work, "wrote the history of the war in which the Peloponnesians and Athenians fought against one another. He began to write when they first took up arms, believing that it would be great and memorable above any previous war. For he argued that both states were then at the full height of their military power, and he saw the rest of the Hellenes either siding or intending to side with one or the other of them. No movement ever stirred Hellas more deeply than this; it was shared by many of the barbarians, and might be said even to affect the world at large." He began to write, that is, when it broke out, the history of a great war, not a history of Athens or of the Peloponnesian states; not a history of Hellenic culture or of Athenian democracy; not a description of unknown countries, except as absolutely necessary, or of unknown peoples and customs; not personal descriptions or anecdotes of private life — Ion of Chios and Stesimbrotus of Thasos could do that — but a war-history. And even in writing a war-history his aim would not be to please and entertain, as Herodotus did, but to instruct. "If he who desires to have before his eyes a true picture of the events which have happened, and of the like events which may be expected to happen hereafter in the order of human things,

shall pronounce what I have written to be useful, then I shall be satisfied. My history is an everlasting possession, not a prize composition which is heard and forgotten."

Who is it that speaks with this new note of self-repression and utilitarian purpose? A man who, at the time of which he speaks, was about thirty-five years old, a citizen of Athens, who belonged by descent to a princely family of Thrace, as Cimon had, and still possessed rich estates in that country. He was highly educated after the manner of the best Sophists, and doubtless found Anaxagoras an intellectual father, as Pericles did. He was emancipated from the undue authority of tradition and custom, and given to logical analysis and criticism. His intellectual processes, that is, were distinctly modern. That he took active part in public life before the year 424 B.C., may be safely inferred from the fact that in that year he was made one of the ten *Strategi*, whose office was the highest under the Empire. Assigned to command on the coast of Thrace, he failed to prevent Brasidas from capturing Amphipolis, the northern jewel of the Empire, and was in consequence banished on pain of death. His purpose to write a history of the war, however, was not thwarted by this misfortune. Indeed, it may rather be inferred that he had now the leisure, as he had always had the means and the disposition, to continue the history which he had begun at the outbreak of hostilities in 431. "The same Thucydides of Athens," he writes in V, 26, "continued the history up to the destruction of the Athenian Empire. For twenty years I was banished from my country after I held the command at Amphipolis, and associating with both sides, with the Peloponnesians quite as much as with the Athenians, because of my exile, I was thus enabled to watch quietly the course of events, and I took great pains to make out the exact truth." It is safe inference that this banished Athenian spent much time on his estates in Thrace, and that he travelled much, where it was allowed him to travel, in the prosecution

of his inquiries. He returned to Athens in 404, after the war was over, and began to put his material into final form. Eight years, perhaps, were employed in this task, when death overtook him, before its completion. His work, unlike that of Herodotus, is therefore a fragment. Seven of the twenty-seven years during which the Athenian Empire was fighting to maintain itself find no record in what has come down to us from Thucydides, and the last of the eight books into which the extant material has been judiciously divided by ancient critics plainly lacks the author's final revision. But three distinct manners are plainly to be seen in what we have of the work — a philosophic manner, as in the first book; an annalistic manner, as in books two, three, four, and five (resumed again in the incomplete eighth book); and an episodic manner, as in the story of the campaign at Pylos and Sphacteria, of the siege of Plataea, or the major story of the Sicilian expedition. All three manners are alike characterized by a dramatic method which projects events and persons as it were upon a stage, and leaves them to act out there the Fall of the Athenian Empire. Apparently, but only in appearance, the author pronounces few judgments on men and events, leaving them for the judgment of his readers. His detachment, in all three manners, has certainly never been surpassed. An oligarch in political convictions, to whom an extreme democracy was "manifest folly," he yet gives us a sympathetic and spirited picture of the Athenian democracy under Pericles, in which inherent weaknesses are not suffered to obscure pure and lofty ideals. An Athenian to the core, he never belittles Spartan nobility and greatness, but gives us in his portrait of Brasidas a character hardly second to that of Pericles. An admirer of the Athenian Empire, a participant in its honors, and stimulated to literary activity by its splendor, as Herodotus had been by that of the Persian Empire, he uncovers with relentless hand the greed and cruelty which marked its growth, culmination, and

decline. In historical philosophy our best modern historians may well surpass him, especially as the appreciation of economic laws is a modern acquisition. But in episodic power, and, above all, in personal detachment from the characters and events of his story, it is no exaggeration to say that he remains unsurpassed.

The philosophic manner of Thucydides may be best illustrated by a brief outline of the general introduction to his narrative of the war formed by his first book, which was clearly written after the war was over, *i.e.* after 404 B.C.

A brief *prooemium* emphasizes the greatness of his theme. The empire of the Hellenic world was at stake. The earlier history of this Hellenic world is rapidly reviewed in the clear light of reason, which uncovers the falsity of legend and romantic oral tradition, and a new standard is set for the treatment of ancient and recent history. Coming to the treatment of contemporary and current history — a new art entirely—he says: "Of the events of the war I have not ventured to speak from any chance information, nor according to any notion of my own; I have described nothing but what I either saw myself, or learned from others of whom I made the most particular inquiry" (i, 22, 2). He catches oral tradition, therefore, in the making, and not, as Herodotus did, after a generation or two of romantic expansion or partisan distortion. The war which he is to describe had a deep, underlying general cause — the growth of the Athenian Empire into formidable dimensions; and also immediate and special occasions, such as the Athenian alliance with Corcyra and the siege of Potidaea. Both the immediate occasions and the general cause are treated at length, and then more briefly the various diplomatic steps which preceded the actual declaration of war by Sparta and her Peloponnesian confederacy. This is a philosophical method, and, though new in the world then, it can hardly be improved upon now. Various economic relations may be brought into

prominence in setting forth the general underlying cause of the war, as Mr. Cornford has lately so well done,[1] but, remembering that economic science is a development of the nineteenth century, historical students may well rest satisfied with the elaborate introduction of Thucydides. Contrast the semi-playful tone with which Herodotus introduces his story of the Persian Wars. Some Phoenicians carried off Io from Argos, and in retaliation some Greeks carried off Europa from Phoenicia. "Bearing these things in mind," Alexander the son of Priam carried off Helen, and the Greeks were fools enough, according to the Persian view, to make a fuss about it and lead an army into Asia. Hence the enmity of the Persians. It is true that as regards the initial outrage of the series the Phoenicians claim that Io was no better than she should have been, and followed them of her own free will. "Which of these two accounts is true," says Herodotus (i, 5, Rawlinson's translation), "I shall not trouble to decide. I shall proceed at once to point out the person who first within my knowledge commenced aggressions on the Greeks, after which I shall go forward with my history." The difference between the artistic story-teller and the philosophical historian could not be made plainer.

The annalistic manner of Thucydides is often dry and tedious. But it is certain that even this manner is an advance upon its greatest exponent hitherto, namely Hellanicus; and the fact that Thucydides was obliged to establish his own system of chronology makes us charitable. It is easy for us, with our perfected calendar, to fix with precision the temporal relations of events. It was not easy for Thucydides to do so. Lists of archons, or other official personages, were used in different cities of Hellas to mark the time of past events, and Hellanicus had finally catalogued his events according to Athenian archons, a good standard certainly throughout the Athenian Empire. But, Thucydides objects (v, 20, 2),

[1] F. M. Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus*, London, 1907.

"whether an event occurred in the beginning, or in the middle, or whatever might be the exact point, of a magistrate's term of office, is left uncertain by such a mode of reckoning." He therefore measured time by summers and winters, counting each summer and winter as a half-year, and established with infinite precision his initial year and event. In the fifteenth year of the peace which was concluded after the recovery of Euboea, the forty-eighth year of Chrysis the high-priestess of Argos, "Aenesias being ephor at Sparta, and at Athens Pythodorus having two months of his archonship to run, in the sixth month after the engagement at Potidaea, and at the beginning of spring, about the first watch of the night an armed force of Thebans entered Plataea," and the war was on. This impresses us as a large apparatus for small resultant precision, since we can glibly say that at half-past four o'clock on the morning of the 12th of April, 1861 A.D., the first shot of our Civil War was fired. But since Thucydides had devised a system of chronology far superior to anything in use before him, it is small wonder that he makes much of it, and so becomes wearisome to us moderns, especially if the events which he chronicles seem to us, as many of them do, trivial. In relation to his theme, the behavior of the Athenian Empire under stress and strain of war, they can rarely be called trivial.

Of the third manner of Thucydides, which I have called the episodic, *i.e.* the manner in which he narrates the great episodes of the war, surely little need be said here, when so good a judge of narrative as Macaulay has pronounced his story of the Sicilian Expedition the "*ne plus ultra* of human art." And time would fail to speak sufficiently here of his digressions, few in number, always logically connected with the main story, and always peculiarly telling from the fact that they seem a condescension on the part of one whose aim is far higher than merely to entertain. In Herodotus, the entertaining digression rises almost to the dignity of a main

object; in Thucydides, it is a rare jewel in a severe setting. And yet how graceful and fanciful and altogether charming Thucydides can be, in spite of his scorn for the historical charmer, is to be seen in the digression which depicts the career of Themistocles after his ostracism (i, 135–138). Threading his way through the maze of legend which had accumulated about the figure of Themistocles after his departure from the better known parts of Hellas, Thucydides has not the heart to eliminate from his story certain most romantic features, and shows us in the scene at the palace of Admetus, King of the Molossians, an ability to follow and develop Homeric suggestions fully equal to that of Herodotus. It is like a smile upon a stern face (λέων ἐγέλασεν ἐνταῦθα[1]).

On the speeches also in Thucydides the whole time now at our disposal might profitably be spent.[2] A purely ornamental literary device in Homer and Herodotus has been lifted by him into a means for securing that personal detachment from the events and characters of his story which is the despair of all who come after him, and an apparent objectivity of presentation which is seen only in the best drama. These speeches range all the way from the brief hortatory appeal of a commander to his soldiers just before a battle, through the lengthy addresses of embassies to parliamentary assemblies, up to the matchless speech put into the mouth of Pericles ostensibly to commemorate the citizens of Athens fallen in battle during an uneventful year of the war, but really to set forth the historian's broad conception of the imperial democracy of Athens, now fallen, and of the high ideals of that democracy's first ruler and guide. "I have put into the mouth of each speaker," says Thucydides (i, 22, 1), "the sentiments proper to the occasion, expressed as

[1] Scholiast on i, 126, 3.

[2] R. C. Jebb, "The Speeches of Thucydides," in Abbott's *Hellenica*, Oxford, 1880.

I thought he would be likely to express them, while at the same time I endeavored, as nearly as I could, to give the general purport of what was actually said." As to Professor Bury's interesting suggestion that the speeches composed in his more obscure manner contain more of what Thucydides thought was "proper to the occasion," and those composed in his simpler manner more of "what was actually said," we may be somewhat skeptical. And summing the matter up, we may say that in Thucydides, as in Herodotus, for all their deficiencies, there are certain high qualities, and more in Thucydides and higher than in Herodotus, which have never been surpassed by writers of history. How potent still is the influence of Thucydides may be clearly seen by those who know him in the pages of Mr. Rhodes's great and now standard history of our Civil War.

The interrupted task of Thucydides was completed by Xenophon, who tried to follow his methods and continue his spirit, but succeeded with only a faint success. The modern historian has nothing to learn from Xenophon that his master does not better teach, except, perhaps, in the matter of biography. The words of Grote are familiar: "It is at this point that we have to part company with the historian Thucydides. . . . The full extent of this irreparable loss can hardly be conceived. . . . To pass from Thucydides to the *Hellenica* of Xenophon, is a descent truly mournful; and yet, when we look at Grecian history as a whole, we have great reason to rejoice that even so inferior a work as the latter has reached us." In Xenophon's completion of the history of the Peloponnesian War we welcome the method and manner of Thucydides, but we miss his discerning power, and, above all, his detachment. For Xenophon had only a mediocre talent, and besides was a partisan; a partisan, too, not of Athens, his native city, but of Sparta. And in his continuation of Greek history down to 362, we can never forgive him the distortion of view which elevates so unduly

the personality of Agesilaus of Sparta, and depreciates so unduly, almost to the point of utter neglect, that of the Theban Epaminondas, whom Cicero called "princeps Graecorum." It is not too harsh a judgment to call Xenophon in history, as in philosophy, an agreeable dilettante.

Of his contemporary, Cratippus, whom Plutarch clearly regards as the leading historian of Greece for the period following the point at which Thucydides's work breaks off, we know too little to pass any broad judgment upon him, even allowing, with some English scholars, that a considerable historical fragment discovered at Oxyrhynchus in Egypt by the Messrs. Grenfell and Hunt should be attributed to him and not to Theopompus. And what little we can learn about Philistus of Syracuse, the historian of Sicily and the two tyrants Dionysius, leads us to think that Cicero was apt in styling him a miniature Thucydides.

But now, with the disappearance of Epaminondas from the scene of his triumphs, with the rise of the Macedonian power to political supremacy in Greece, and with the remarkable intellectual domination of all Hellas by the orator Isocrates, a new political idea and a new literary form became current, and forced into new lines the art of writing history. The new political idea was that of the unity of the Greeks against Persia, and the new literary form was rhetorical prose. Historical writing became more widely national, and rhetorical devices ministered to the pleasure of hearers and readers as epic poetry or epic prose narrative had once done. When, therefore, Ephorus of Cyme wrote his *Hellenica*, or History of Greece, though he had a large national theme, corresponding well to the imperial theme of Thucydides, he did not continue the line of historical writers who, like Hellanicus and Thucydides, were devoted to fact more than to form, and wrote to instruct rather than to please — as Hesiod the poet had done, in protest against Homer — but rather the line which culminated in Herodotus, and

affected the Homeric manner and charm. The manner and the charm of Ephorus were new, but they were his main objects in writing. "The form was of more importance than the substance, and freely shaped the substance to its needs." And, in true Homeric fashion, he did not hesitate to cater to the reigning taste by the embellishment or even the invention of detail. He sacrificed truth to rhetorical effect. And yet he achieved an immense popularity, and established what has been called "the Vulgate of Greek history." One might be tempted to call his contemporary and rival, Theopompus of Chios, the Thucydides of this rhetorical period, as Ephorus was its Herodotus; but in Theopompus also, in spite of his erudition and industrious quest of the truth, especially in his huge chronicle of contemporary history, the *Philippica*, the rhetorical element triumphs over the didactic, and besides, a certain bigotry and bitterness of partisanship, together with a pessimistic skepticism and an undiscriminating censoriousness, combine to make him rather a soured and crabbed Herodotus, if that is conceivable, than a later Thucydides. From a historiography which is the slave of formal rhetoric, the modern historian has nothing to learn except how not to write history, and his regret that Ephorus and Theopompus are known principally in the citations of later compilers is tempered by the remembrance of the kind fortune which has brought Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon down to him in their entirety.

But while Ephorus and Theopompus were yet writing, a new personage had entered the ancient world, who, in an amazingly short time, completely transformed it. Alexander, the son of Philip of Macedon, in a meteoric career of less than twenty years, surpassed in actual and palpable achievements all that the glowing imaginations of poets and prose romancers had devised for men to admire and wonder at. Once more, as in the sixth and fifth centuries, history became stranger and more fascinating than romance had been, and led the

way to still bolder flights of fancy in a new romance. The wonders of India and the extreme East now eclipsed what had once been wonderful in Persia and the nearer East, as that had eclipsed the wonders of the heroic age, and Greek fancy grew by what it fed upon. On Alexander himself the marvellous in his career seems to have produced some spell, nor was it wholly from political reasons that he came to think himself, and to wish others to think him, a god. On the smaller spirits in his retinue the marvellous in their experience produced the effect of an apparent incapacity to state a common fact as such. There were sober heads among them, it is true -- a Callisthenes, an Aristobulus, a Ptolemy, a Nearchus, and from them we know the truth about Alexander's campaigns, but only because the Graeco-Roman Arrian, four centuries later, recurred to their testimonies. Their contemporaries would none of them, but preferred the extravagant exaggerations of Onesicritus, or the wilder flights of fancy which marked the current and popular oral tradition. For Alexander was accompanied from the first by a travelling literary court of poets, philosophers, and historians, and each of the momentous steps in his progress was celebrated by athletic and literary festivals to which the greatest artists of Greece were summoned. His frequent exchange of worn-out soldiers for fresher and younger ones also kept up a constant line of oral communication between his deeds and the riotous fancy of the stay-at-homes. But so rapid and dazzling were his achievements that contemporary imagination could not keep pace with them. Especially after the conqueror had vanished wholly from the view of the Hellenic world during the three years of his Indian expedition did the Hellenic imagination revel in the historical and mythological possibilities of the case. Heracles and Dionysus were not only imitated, but outdone, by this new god of conquest. Moreover, the mental energies of the Ionian Hellenes, deflected from political life by the Macedonian supremacy,

found vent more than ever in literary expression. Old forms of expression were cultivated into decadence, and new forms were devised. The literature of pure romance began. There was, however, no such recognized channel, as yet, for the flow of pure fancy and invention in prose as was afforded later by professedly fictitious narrative — the romance and the novel. These were yet to be set apart as distinct forms of literary art. Fancy and invention therefore found play in the realm of what should have been historical narrative. And so it came to pass that before Alexander had been dead thirty years, a mass of legend and romance had grown up around the main authenticated facts of his career. This mass has been varied in its rhetorical treatment rather than sensibly increased by the romantic invention which has ever since been busy with that career, down through the middle ages, and into the times of our Old English literature.

This romantic version of Alexander's career, with its firm basis of authenticated facts and its luxuriant envelope of legend and fictitious anecdote, vague with all the vagueness of popular tradition, found its Herodotus in Cleitarchus of Colophon, a contemporary, but not a companion, of Alexander. He was the son of Deinon of Colophon, who was an imaginative historian of eastern realms, and a pupil of Stilpo of Megara, a rhetorician and philosopher celebrated above all for grace and cleverness of literary style. His history of Alexander, highly rhetorical, and full of the wildest flights of fancy, became the standard, as the history of Greece down to Alexander by Ephorus was standard. It forestalled the sober testimonies of the four sober companions of Alexander to whom Arrian, four centuries later, led the world back, for, at the time, it met the world's demands. We know Cleitarchus chiefly through late Roman compilers like Diodorus Siculus, Justin, and Quintus Curtius, but we understand perfectly why the author of the treatise "On the Sublime" calls him empty and bombastic, and why even Plutarch dis-

credits him. "At this time," says Plutarch (*Alexander*, xlvi), "most writers say that the Queen of the Amazons paid a visit to Alexander, of whom are Cleitarchus and Onesicritus. But Ptolemy and Aristobulus say that this is fiction." Cleitarchus therefore followed Onesicritus in preference to Ptolemy and Aristobulus, and of Onesicritus, thanks to Lucian, we can form a sure estimate.

Just after the great Indian campaign against Porus and his elephants, and while Alexander and his army were descending the Hydaspes in their extemporized flotilla, a certain historian, so Lucian tells us (*Quom. hist. scrib.*, xii), bent on flattery, read aloud to Alexander what he had written about a fierce duel between Alexander in person and the gigantic Porus mounted on an elephant. Now we have in Arrian what is substantially Ptolemy's account of the battle with Porus, and there neither was nor could have been at any time during the battle a duel between Porus and Alexander. But just as at Issus and Arbela romantic historians insist, against all the facts, on bringing Darius and Alexander into personal combat, so in the struggle with Porus the flattering historian thought that the two leaders must have their Homeric duel. Here we can put our finger on Alexander-romance in the very making. As the historian read aloud to Alexander, thinking to gratify the king by inventing the most fabulous exploits for him, Alexander caught away the writing from him and hurled it into the river, saying, "I ought to do the same to you, my man, for fighting such a duel and killing such elephants for me with a single javelin." This historian, as we learn from another passage in the same work of Lucian (chap. xl), was Onesicritus, the Munchausen of Alexander's companions. And it is in all probability his version of the visit of the Amazonian queen to Alexander which Arrian mentions as "reported" (vii. 13, 3), only to remark: "but this is recorded neither by Ptolemy nor Aristobulus, nor by any one else capable of testimony in such

matters. And personally, I do not believe that the race of Amazons was surviving at that time, nor before Alexander's time either, or Xenophon would have mentioned them." This reputed visit of the queen of the Amazons to Alexander may serve as a fair specimen of the countless bold inventions which the history of Cleitarchus adopted.

With Cleitarchus and his history of Alexander, which was for a long time canonical, we may well close this brief survey of Greek historiography. In the century after Alexander, Duris of Samos was led to write a history of Greece in which, judging from the fragments of it which have come down to us, startling effects were sought and gained by resort to coarse and realistic sensationalism, a new manifestation of the Homeric and Herodotean desire to please rather than to instruct, but not one which became dominant. With Timaeus of Tauromenium and with Polybius the Roman spirit manifests itself, and historiography ceases to be distinctively Hellenic. "Distinctively Greek historiography," to repeat from the opening paragraph of the lecture, "may be said to end with the historians of Alexander's career. And it ends, as it begins, with a triumph of fancy and invention over fact and re-presentation. In the middle ground, in Thucydides and Xenophon, the desire to inform is duly enthroned beside the desire to please; but the Greek hearer or reader usually preferred a flight of the imagination to a statement of the truth; and the sovereign names among the Greeks themselves were Homer, Herodotus, Ephorus, and Cleitarchus, names representing a body of highly imaginative and mainly fictitious poetry, and a body of highly imaginative and largely fictitious prose." And our survey has itself made plain, without further definition, the permanent value of this body of historical literature. It has such value if it does no more than illustrate, by two splendid specimens in the works of Herodotus and Thucydides, artistic success in writing history that charms, and artistic success in writing history that

edifies. Imagination a good historian must always have, creative imagination even, especially in the problems of psychological reconstruction, wherein the best modern historians make most advance upon Thucydides; and rhetorical skill a good historian must have, in order to win readers for the truths which he has laboriously elicited from complex testimonies. But the imagination must not become inventive purely, nor must the inventions of imagination or the attractions of rhetoric ever become the main object of the historian. How easy to illustrate from the works of modern historians with which we are all familiar! How easy, also, to follow Professor Bury when he says, "Within the limits of the task he attempted Thucydides was a master in the craft of investigating contemporary events, and it may be doubted whether, within those limits, the nineteenth century would have much to teach him."

B. Perrin.

ORATORY

With the Attic orators the object in view was always the Demos on the Pnyx or in the Agora; only gradually did they come to think of that later and wider audience that might read the speeches. So the test of a Greek speech, which was meant to please and persuade quite as much as to convince, was always oral; the appeal was to the ear. The Athenians came to an oratorical contest, "to enjoy a critical repast," as to an exhibition of mental acumen and skill and strength. Their delight in oratory was one of the chief secrets of the orator's success. They appreciated not merely telling hits made against an adversary; their ears must be charmed by the chosen word, by euphonious arrangement. Isocrates speaks of "the antitheses, the symmetrical clauses, and other figures which lend brilliancy to oratorical displays, compelling the listeners to give clamorous applause." Gorgias was the legitimate successor of the Homeric rhapsodes; his poetical rhetoric took the place of the rhapsodical chants of which the world had grown tired. Isocrates would doubtless have followed in his footsteps even more closely if he had had voice and nerve; but not being able to face the crowd he tried to put into the written word all the beauty and charm of speech. The orator has always depended largely on the inspiration caught from a great mass of listening people; but no orators of any other people have succeeded in retaining in the written records of their speeches so much of the evanescent fervor and charm and beauty which captivated their audiences. This was due to their innate feeling for beauty and to their taking infinite pains. "The artist

should labor," said Nietzsche, "over a page of prose as the sculptor over a statue." The closet-orator Isocrates spent ten years elaborating his *Panegyricus;* and something like that intense and patient labor characterized all the great orators of the Ecclesia. Pytheas reproached Demosthenes because his speeches "smelled of the lamp." Plutarch relates that Demosthenes could hardly ever be induced to speak off-hand, however often called upon in public assemblies. He was unwilling, he said, to "put his faculty at the mercy of fortune." Consummate and unfailing beauty of language, exquisite finish and perfect polish, characterize all his speeches. That is because of his extreme care in composition — care like that of Plato, whose note-book contained the initial eight words of the *Republic* written in several different orders of arrangement. "The best words in the best order" — Swift's definition of style — was the aim of Plato and Demosthenes, the aim of course of all who would be artists in language. "It is not strange," says Dionysius,[1] "if a man who has won more glory for eloquence than any of those who were renowned before him, who is shaping works for all the future, who is offering himself to the scrutiny of all-testing Envy and Time, adopts no thought, no word at random, but takes much care of both things, the arrangement of his ideas and the graciousness of his language."

It was not alone the genius of the orator, nor his sense of beauty, that caused him to toil so hard for perfection. The Demos at Athens was, in great part, the explanation of his extraordinary eloquence. "Finish of workmanship is not lost in any popular assembly," says Professor Butcher;[2] "and the audience in the case of Demosthenes was a nation of artists who enjoyed a political debate as they did a dramatic or musical festival." The audiences that Pericles and Demosthenes used to address, in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., were probably the cleverest,

[1] Περὶ συνθέσεως ὀνομάτων c. 25. [2] *Demosthenes*, p. 164.

quickest-witted popular assemblies the world ever saw. The nearest parallel we can find to the Athenian Demos is not any modern populace, but a representative assembly like the British Parliament. "In Athens an incessant struggle for independence, for power, or for liberty, could not fail to rouse the genius of every citizen — to force the highest talent to the highest station — to animate her councils with a holy zeal, and to afford to her orators all that, according to the profoundest writers of antiquity, is necessary to the sublimest strains of eloquence." [1]

Marked intellectual activity and openness of mind characterized the Attic Demos, a sharp and penetrating understanding, a delicate and refined taste, and an insatiable love of the spoken word. Their training differed from that of any other populace. Everyday life at Athens was a sort of university course: the theatrical exhibitions and the beautiful processions on festal days, the daily sessions of the law-courts in which Athens transacted the legal business of her wide-spread empire, the frequent meetings of the assemblies of the people to decide the weightiest matters whether of war or peace, the athletic exercises and contests, the schools of the sophists and of the philosophers, the noble art with which all the public places were adorned — with such an environment the people were at school all the time. And the best of it all was that with them it was not only business but recreation. One of their chief pastimes was listening to their orators, delighting in the keen and brilliant fencing of the Ecclesia as at a spectacle.[2] All this was part of "the busy, rhythmic, colored life of Greece." It made life for the Athenians a sort of perpetual holiday. If one is asked for the proofs that the Attic Demos had such artistic and literary taste beyond other peoples, it is enough to say that Pericles and Demosthenes swayed them as no other speakers;

[1] Quoted by Lord Brougham in *Inaugural Discourse* (*Speeches*, iii, p. 82, foot-note).

[2] Cf. Thuc. iii, 38.

that for them were composed the *Agamemnon* and *Prometheus*, the *Antigone* and *Oedipus Rex;* for them Thucydides wrote his immortal history, and Plato his incomparable dialogues; for their delectation Ictinus built and Phidias adorned with marble sculptures the Parthenon.

Oratory as a fine art begins with Gorgias and Isocrates; eloquence as a divine gift already characterized Achilles and Odysseus, or at least the poet who created them. Oratory has always been the handmaid of liberty, and we could be sure, even if we did not know it from Homer, that the race which first enjoyed freedom and developed popular government would prize persuasive speech as one of the greatest of human endowments. It was the voice of the people that decided matters in the Greek host at Troy; the assemblies in the Greek camp were but the counterpart of those in Thessaly and Ithaca, and it was the voice of powerful and persuasive speakers that swayed men in the one place or the other. The Homeric triad of excellences was "power of discourse" (ἀγορητύς), "physical prowess" (φυή), and "good sense" (φρένες). Odysseus enumerates[1] the "three prime endowments that can be received from the providence of the gods — eloquence, beauty, and the power of thought." Peleus sent along with Achilles to Troy the aged Phoenix to train him to be "both a speaker of words and a doer of deeds"; and this ideal of Hellenic manhood is represented by the poet as the best fighter, the swiftest runner, the most powerful speaker, and withal fond of music. Telemachus made a very creditable first appearance in the assembly of the people in Ithaca. That was no wonder; he was the son of Odysseus, of whom the poet said, "When he uttered his great voice from his chest and words like unto the snowflakes of winter, then no mortal could contend with Odysseus."[2] And from such a speaker come fittingly words like these: "The gods do not give every gracious gift to all,

[1] *Od.* viii. 168. [2] Il. iii. 221 ff.

neither shapeliness nor wisdom, nor skilled speech. For one man is feebler than another in presence, yet the gods crown his words with beauty, and men behold him and rejoice, and his speech runs surely on its way with sweet modesty, and he shines forth among the gathering of the people, and as he passes through the town men gaze on him as a god." [1]

There were many kinds of eloquence among Homer's heroes. It was in reminiscence that Nestor's speech "flowed sweeter than honey." It might be pathos that is required, and then the aged Priam will say to Achilles, "I have borne what no one on earth has ever borne, to lift to my lips the hand of the man who has slain my son." Of its kind nothing could be more artful and effective than the plea of the hungry outcast Odysseus to the maiden Nausicaa for protection and food and raiment. For a proud warrior insulted and wronged the reply of Achilles to Agamemnon's envoys, offering apologies and gifts, will perhaps remain forever unequalled. "It seems to me that his speeches," says Gladstone, "may challenge comparison with all that we find in Homer, and with all that the ebb and flow of three thousand years have added to our records of human eloquence." [2] These Homeric speakers were the forerunners of the great orators of the Pnyx five hundred years later. "A faculty of debate," says Gladstone, "never surpassed, if ever equalled in human history, is found in both poems." It is just here that Jebb rightly finds the secret of our liking for the speeches of Homer. "Nor does any oratory," he says, "that the ancient world has left approach so nearly as the Homeric to the modern ideal. The reason of this is that the great orations of the *Iliad* are made in debate, and the greatest of all are replies — as the answer of Achilles to the envoys in the ninth book. Condensed statement, lucid argument, repartee, sarcasm, irony, overwhelming invective, profound and irresistible pathos — all these resources are absolutely commanded by the orators

[1] *Od.* viii. 167 ff.

[2] *Juventus Mundi*, p. 432.

of the *Iliad*, and all these must have belonged to him, or to those, by whom the *Iliad* was created."[1] "When we find these speeches in Homer," says Gladstone, "we know that there must have been men who could speak them, so from the existence of units who could speak them, we know that there must have been crowds who could feel them."[2]

It was with an elegy that the supposedly crazy Solon addressed the Athenians in the Agora, rousing them to retake Salamis from the Megarians. But his words mark the orator rather than the poet: "Let me be a Pholegandrian or a Sicinete instead of an Athenian, exchanging my fatherland; for soon will this report go forth among men: 'An Attic man this, one of the betrayers of Salamis.' Let us on to Salamis, to fight for the lovely island, and wipe out the bitter shame." The form is verse, but it clothes an impassioned popular harangue. The leading spirit of the Persian Wars, too, was preëminently "a speaker of words and a doer of deeds." Thucydides (i. 138) thus describes Themistocles: "The ablest judge of the course to be pursued in a sudden emergency and the readiest to divine what was likely to happen in the remotest future. Whatever he had in hand he had the power to set forth to others."

But speakers like Achilles and Odysseus, and later like Solon and Themistocles, were only men of extraordinary oratorical gifts: it was not art, but nature; and practice made perfect. A speech might be a great one, but its effect and influence were transitory; or, not being written, it was heard and forgotten. Oratory proper begins when speeches begin to be written, and the history of Greek oratory commences with Gorgias of Leontini. The epoch may be dated from his embassy to Athens in 427 B.C. The distinguishing element of his speech, which aimed above all at beauty of expression — "to charm the ear, as much as to amuse the mind" — was its poetical character. It "imi-

[1] *Attic Orators*, i. p. cvii. [2] *Homer and the Homeric Age*, iii. p. 107.

tated the rhythm as well as the phrase of poetry." Poetical phraseology, symmetrical arrangement, balance of clauses, assonance, characterized a prose with a rhythm so striking as to make an appeal much like that of verse. Gorgias used ornamental epithets, some one has said, "not as a relish, but as food." His oratory delighted men's ears; for the time it seemed artistic and beautiful, and aroused enthusiasm. Judging from the specimens we have in fragments it is hard to realize that Athenians of the close of the fifth century, the same men that appreciated Sophocles in the theatre and Pericles in the Agora, should have received Gorgias' brilliant rhetoric with boundless applause; that its effect should have been sensational. But we come to Gorgias familiar with the speeches of orators that had got rid of his defects and had brought to perfection what was best in his method; in other words, Demosthenes has spoiled our taste for oratory like that of Gorgias. Its defects are plain enough now; but when all deductions are made, the fact remains that Gorgias was the founder of artistic prose. "On the whole his merit is in having been for Thucydides almost what Isocrates was for Demosthenes or Bossuet for Balzac. He rendered the instrument flexible, and put it into the hands of the great artist."[1]

The first name in the Canon, or list of ten best orators made by later critics, is Antiphon. Tradition made Thucydides his pupil; and indeed in Gorgias and Antiphon[2] we have perhaps the two influences which chiefly affected the style of Thucydides. The speeches which the historian inserts in his narrative are so important that they cannot be overlooked in any treatment of Greek oratory. These speeches — forty-one in number, including the famous *Funeral Oration*

[1] Croiset, *Abridged History of Greek Literature*, p. 285.

[2] Limits of space prevent any discussion of the merits of Antiphon, Andocides, Isaeus, Lycurgus, and Dinarchus.

by Pericles — are represented as spoken by leading actors in the great drama of the Peloponnesian War. Thucydides thus states the principles which guided him in their composition: "As to the various speeches made on the eve of the war, or in its course, I have found it difficult to retain a memory of the precise words which I had heard spoken; and so it was with those who had brought me reports. But I have made the persons say what it seemed to me most opportune for them to say in view of each situation; at the same time I have adhered as closely as possible to the general sense of what was actually said." [1] No doubt we have here a candid and truthful statement of Thucydides' procedure. Here, as everywhere else in his history, he faithfully represents the cardinal facts of the situation as he saw them. Many of the speeches that were actually made on various occasions are doubtless given in substance, but the form is the historian's. "The work is meant to be a possession forever, not the rhetorical triumph of an hour." Thus the great historian expresses his ideal; and it is due largely to the speeches that his aim has been realized. "It is chiefly by these," says Jebb, "that the facts of the Peloponnesian War are transformed into typical examples of universal laws and illuminated with a practical significance for the students of politics in every age and country." It was the speeches doubtless which the elder Pitt had chiefly in mind when he called Thucydides' history "that eternal manual of statesmen." How constituent a part they are of the work we can realize by imagining the first seven books in the state in which the eighth was left. We can as easily conceive of the tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles without choruses, as of the history of Thucydides without speeches.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus distinguishes three principal styles of composition, the "austere" or grand, the "middle" or smooth, and the "plain." His representative of the

[1] Thuc. i, 22.

"austere" style in lyric poetry is Pindar, in tragedy Aeschylus, in history Thucydides, in oratory Antiphon. A part of his description of the "austere" style seems especially applicable to Thucydides. "As regards separate words, these are the objects of its pursuit and craving. In whole clauses it shows these tendencies no less strongly, especially it chooses the most dignified and majestic rhythms. It does not wish the clauses to be like each other in length or structure, or enslaved to a severe syntax, but noble, simple, free. It wishes them to bear the stamp of nature rather than that of art, and to stir feeling rather than to reflect character. It does not usually aim at composing periods as a compact framework for its thought; but if it should ever drift undesignedly into the periodic style, it desires to set on this the mark of spontaneity and plainness. It does not employ, in order to round a sentence, supplementary words which do not help the sense; it does not care that the march of its phrase should have stage-glitter or an artificial smoothness; nor that the clauses should be separately adapted to the length of the speaker's breath."[1]

Voltaire's sarcasm, "Set speeches are a sort of oratorical lie, which the historian used to allow himself in old times," does not apply to Thucydides, though he was the originator of that custom. His dramatic way of making historical persons express, at critical moments of the war, ideas that exerted an important influence, is conducive to the vivid and truthful presentment of action. The language of the speeches is wholly or chiefly his own; dramatic truth is in the matter, not the form, for there is little discrimination in the style of the various speeches. The expression of character is like that of Greek tragedy — typical rather than individual. The dignity of history, as Thucydides conceived it, allowed no greater latitude. If he had had before him the original speeches, he would doubtless have remodelled the expression

[1] Περὶ συνθ. ὀνομ. c. 22.

to conform to his general plan, as he seems to have done with the letter of Nicias in the seventh book.

It is in the speeches, or *résumés* of situations, that his literary dialect, if it may be called so, is most marked; and it is here, according to Dionysius, that the force of his genius is most manifest. The speeches are simple and plain in structure, but so condensed in expression, so laden with thought — "an inexhaustible mine of political observations and profound reflections" — that even a popular Athenian audience must have found them difficult to follow. Thucydides has a great wealth of archaic or poetic words, and coins a multitude of new ones; the general effect of which is to lend greater nobility to his language. In this the influence of Gorgias may perhaps be seen. Thucydides' use and sometimes abuse of antithesis, the constant balancing of λόγος and ἔργον, possibly his fondness for archaic and poetic terms, may be signs of the Gorgian influence so strong at Athens just when he was composing the history. I prefer to believe, however, that he was influenced by Pindar and Aeschylus rather than by Gorgias, both in his poetic vocabulary and in his new-coined terms. Corresponding to all this is his frequent use of neuter adjectives and participles as substantives, his constant employment of verbal substantives, especially those ending in -τηs and -σις, and certain peculiarities in orthography: σσ for ττ, ξύν for σύν, -ῆς for -εῖς. The effect of the use of poetic terms familiar to Greek readers from their great national text-book, Homer, or associated in their minds with all that had thrilled and purified them in their great drama, was like borrowing biblical words, which everybody knows and which are consecrated by association, to describe some event of unusual moment. Like the great artist that he is, he gives just enough particulars to make the picture clear and real, leaving all the rest to the imagination. He is a master of stern and solemn pathos, the pathos of naked, awful facts expressed by a few vivid touches

in words fitly chosen or coined to reveal the depth and hopelessness of woe.

Perhaps the speeches that remain most distinctly impressed on the memory are that of the Corinthians in Book I, those spoken by Pericles, especially the great *Funeral Oration*, the debate between Cleon and Diodotus, the appeal for life of the condemned Plataeans, the speeches of Nicias and Gylippus before the final sea-fight in the Great Harbor at Syracuse, and Nicias's final appeal to his despairing army as they started on the march that ended in the catastrophe at the river Assinarus. For pathos perhaps nothing so touches us as the despairing appeal of the Plataeans. There is nothing anywhere that so completely represents the spirit and glory of Periclean Athens as the sublime *Funeral Oration*. "In a word I declare," says the great statesman, "that our city as a whole is the school of Hellas; while every individual citizen among us, it seems to me, would prove himself personally qualified, without aid from others, to meet exigencies the most varied, with a versatility the most graceful. That this is no mere rhetorical vaunt, but the real truth, our political power, the achievement of our national character, is itself proof. For of all existing states Athens alone eclipses her prestige when put to the test; she alone causes no mortification to the invading foe when he thinks by whom he is repulsed, no self-reproach to the subject for being ruled by those who are not worthy. So far from our supremacy needing attestation, shown with the clearest proofs it will command the admiration of future ages as it already does of our own; we need no Homer to sing our praises, nor any other poet whose verse may charm for the moment, even though history mar the conception he raises of our deeds." [1]

The logographers, or lawyers who wrote speeches to be read or recited by others, contributed much to the development of oratory. Among these men Lysias stands first.

[1] ii, 41.

The logographer did not appear in person for his client, and it was his business in writing the speech to assume the character of the actual litigant, who would generally be some man of the people without experience in legal questions. He needed to conceal himself behind his client and identify himself as completely as possible with him. This seems so natural that we might have presumed that the early logographers had all done so. But no, it was a discovery of Lysias. Most of the thirty-four extant speeches were composed for clients to speak, and we are ready to believe that Lysias was averse to the personal contests of the Agora. He lacked the fighting spirit, oratorical fire, passion, vehemence. He seems to have been really a literary man, a shrewd observer of the varying types of human nature, with a pronounced dramatic faculty; a pleader because pleading was a means of making a living, and for this he had extraordinary gifts. With an exquisite feeling for language, he adopted a manner which has always been considered the norm for the "plain style," avoiding poetic terms and idioms and using the vocabulary of current everyday speech. Apparently artless, it was exquisitely artful. It was highly persuasive because it seemed so natural.

His *ethopoiia*, or expression of character, Dionysius finds displayed in three particulars — thought, diction, and composition; that is, the idioms, the words, and the style are recognized as exactly appropriate to the man for whom Lysias wrote the speech, so that we feel, as the jury must have felt, that the litigant was speaking for himself. And so we have in each of the speeches individual types of men vividly represented. These live before our eyes. We hear with complete sympathy the plea of the genial cripple for his pension of one obol per day, of which the malice of an enemy is about to deprive him. It is clearly a sketch from life, in the spirit of Herondas or Horace. The fee in this case could not have meant anything to Lysias; what tempted him was the op-

portunity to sketch a unique character whom every one knew. Then there is the man accused of digging up a sacred olive stump, and his defense reveals a modest citizen who takes pride in quietly and unostentatiously performing all his public duties. A sketch from life, too, is Mantitheus, the ambitious young Eupatrid standing his examination before the Senate. What a pleasant impression all these leave on our memories, and how apt we are, if we turn to one of these sketches to verify a reference, to become interested, forget the reference, and run through the whole sketch again!

That is due to the charm (χάρις), that nameless grace which is inexplicable and unanalyzable, but which all feel to be there. To the Greek critic it was the final criterion of genuine work of Lysias. "When I am puzzled," says Dionysius, "about one of the speeches ascribed to him, and when it is hard for me to find the truth by other marks, I have recourse to this excellence, as to the last piece on the board. Then if the graces of speech seem to me to make the writing fair, I count it to be the soul of Lysias; and I care not to look further into it. But if the stamp of the language has no winningness, no loveliness, I am chagrined, and suspect that after all the speech is not by Lysias; and I do no more violence to my instinct, even though in all else the speech seems to me clever and well finished, believing that to write well, in special styles other than this, is given to many men, but that to write winningly, gracefully, with loveliness, is the gift of Lysias." [1]

Considered from the Greek point of view Lysias reasons cogently and with force, but the quality which, along with ethopoiia, especially distinguishes him is the gift of stating a case. No other talent is more important for a lawyer or public speaker. A great jurist once said that many a lawyer wins his case with the jury before he begins his formal argument on the evidence, simply by the way in which he

[1] Dion. H., *De Lys.* 11.

states his case. The arrest of Lysias and his brother Polemarchus by Eratosthenes, and all the vividly enumerated details of the pillage of the house, the murder of Polemarchus, the escape and flight of Lysias, make up a narrative in which we see everything as it happens, and have a picture of the crimes of the Thirty Tyrants that will forever remain a part of the history of that period of anarchy and spoliation. This greatest of his orations, the only one of those extant known to have been spoken by Lysias himself, alone justifies his claim to all the chief qualities enumerated by his partial critic — plainness and easy versatility, purity of diction, simplicity, vividness.

The reader of the *Eratosthenes*, the *Mantitheus*, the *Cripple*, the *Sacred Olive*, cannot fail to recognize that here is admirable prose, that Lysias is a writer of extraordinary gifts. It is his oratorical power that may be questioned. We have touched upon his shining qualities; what are his defects? "He was deficient in pathos and in fire," says Jebb; and it seems a fair criticism. This may have been due to the same sort of self-restraint that caused Thucydides simply to give such a grouping of facts as would produce the effect, without anything more. For history, that affords the greatest kind of pathos; but with the orator there must be more fervent personal expression. At any rate, in the matter of pathos, Lysias does not produce the effect of Thucydides. As to fire, that is, the passion of the speaker, one needs only to compare Lysias with Demosthenes to realize the vast difference. He lacks two other things, his ancient admirer, Dionysius, admitted — grandeur and spirit.[1] "He touches, but does not pierce the heart; he charms, but fails to astonish or to appal." The want of these qualities kept him out of the class of Demosthenes, or even of Hyperides. But he taught, and may still teach, an inestimable lesson — that the finest art is that which conceals itself. And it would be impossible to say how much his influence helped to check the tendency of

[1] Dion. H., *De Lys.* c. 13.

public speaking to yield to the allurement of artificial ornaments; we do know that it was the style of Lysias on which the advocates of Atticism later took their stand in the conflict with Asianism.

"It might have seemed that a finished simplicity so congenial to the Attic spirit had forever superseded the ideal of Gorgias. But just as the influence of that ideal was declining, a pupil of Gorgias came forward to show that his master's theory, though deformed by extravagances, was grounded in truth. Isocrates proved that, without loss of ease and fluency, prose may be artistically ornate in the general sense of Gorgias (that is, with the aid of certain embellishments proper to poetry), if only these are rightly chosen and temperately used." [1] In these words Jebb makes the transition from Lysias to Isocrates. Great things were expected from the young Isocrates, as may be guessed from Plato's Phaedrus.[2] "Isocrates, is still young, Phaedrus," Plato makes Socrates say, "but I don't mind telling you what I prophesy of him." "And what may that be?" "He seems to me to have a genius above the oratory of Lysias, and altogether to be tempered of nobler elements. And so it would not surprise me if, as years go on, he should make all his predecessors seem like children in the kind of oratory to which he is now addressing himself; or if — supposing this should not content him — some diviner impulse should lead him to greater things. My dear Phaedrus, a certain philosophy is inborn in him. This is my message, then, from the gods of the place to my pet Isocrates — and you have your message for your Lysias." Such recognition from Plato was like Macaulay's prediction about the young Gladstone, "The rising hope of the stern and unbending Tories"; or like the aged Goethe's hail to the young Carlyle across the German ocean: "Carlyle is a moral force of great significance. He has a great future before him, and indeed we can see no end to all he will do and

[1] Jebb, *Attic Orators*, ii. p. 427.

[2] *Phaedr.* 278–279 e.

effect by his influence." [1] Plato at that time evidently expected Isocrates to rise from the art of expression to the search for truth. He remained always on the lower level; but even thus our indebtedness to him is inestimable.

The object of Gorgias was oral and extemporary eloquence. Isocrates' ideal might have been the same if he had had the necessary qualifications to realize it. Endowed with great talent and ambitious to excel in public oratory, Isocrates had neither voice nor nerve equal to the demands of the Agora and the Ecclesia. He doubtless has his own case in mind when he says, in the *Antidosis:* [2] "The physical and the mental training will alike improve natural powers. But the master of the palaestra cannot make a great athlete, nor the teacher of philosophy a great speaker. To make the latter three things are needed — capacity, training, and practice. Capacity — which includes intellect, voice, and nerve — is the chief requisite. Practice, however, can by itself make a good speaker. Training is by far the least important of the three. It may be complete, and yet be rendered useless by the absence of a single quality — nerve." Isocrates had a weak voice and was timid; so, shut out from the courts and the Ecclesia, he opened a school of Rhetoric, or Philosophy as he preferred to call it, and trained young men for public life. Cicero [3] compares this famous school to the Trojan horse, since from it had come forth so many princes of eloquence. Modern scholars have made up a list of forty-one persons eminent in oratory or history who had studied in it. In the panegyrical contest which the queen of Caria instituted in memory of her husband, and which all the chief rhetoricians entered, tradition has it that of all the competitors there was not one who was not a disciple of Isocrates.

Along with his school work he also became an active writer on public questions of the day, a political essayist discussing

[1] *Conversations with Eckermann*, July 25, 1827.
[2] Cf. §§ 180–192. [3] *De Oratore*, ii. 2, 94.

subjects of national, preferably of international, scope. His chief hobby was the union of all the Greeks in the invasion of Persia — the subject of his greatest work, the *Panegyricus*, which he is said to have spent ten years in elaborating, and of his *Philippus*. Isocrates is a true lover of Athens, but his contemplation of large political questions, perhaps also his association with clever youths from all parts of the Hellenic world, gives him a wider outlook; so that in a famous passage of the *Panegyricus*[1] he anticipates the civilization of Hellenism: "Athens has so distanced the rest of the world in power of thought and speech that her disciples have become the teachers of all other men. She has brought it to pass that the name of Greek should be thought no longer a matter of race, but a matter of intelligence; and should be given to the participators in our culture rather than to sharers of our common origin."

Of the three harmonies or styles of composition distinguished by Dionysius, Isocrates represents the "smooth," and well does he illustrate it: "Nor is it only between word and word that this style seeks apt juncture and coherence. It desires that clause should be closely knitted to clause; that every sentence should be rounded to a period; that each segment of a period should be neither shorter nor longer than the just mean; and that the whole period should be within the compass of one full breath. A sentence not periodic, a period not jointed into members, or a member not symmetrical with the rest, are thoroughly foreign to its workmanship. The rhythms which it employs are not the longest, but the middle or the shorter. It wishes the last words of a period to be rhythmical and firmly set, as on a base squared by line and rule — thus reversing, in the structure of these final clauses, its practice in the ordinary harmonies of words. Ordinarily it makes word slide into word. But it would have the closing words

[1] *Panegyr.* 50.

of a period to stand clear, and be seen, as it were, from every side. The figures which it uses are not those which have an antique air, or which are notable for majesty or impressiveness or ruggedness; but rather the luxuriant and voluptuous in which the elements of illusion and stage-glitter are strong. To speak generally — the 'smooth' or 'florid' style is in essentials the opposite of the austere." [1]

The discourses of Isocrates were meant to be read aloud, not spoken. The chief marks of his prose are avoidance of poetical diction, an ampler period, elimination of hiatus, certain rhythmical feet at the beginning and end of sentences. His diction is characterized by a purity as great as that of Lysias, though with a bent toward grandeur, at least in arrangement. Where the austere school relied for effect on words, he relied on composition; in other words, he developed a literary prose rhythm. Hiatus he so carefully avoided that Dionysius went through the whole *Areopagiticus* without finding a single example. He uses sparingly figures of thought, but abundantly figures of language (antithesis), balance of clauses (parisosis), assonance (paromoiosis). The distinctive mark of the Isocratic period was amplitude. "Instead of aiming," as Jebb well expresses it, "at the vigorous compression fittest for real contests, it rejoices in rich diffuseness — it unrolls itself like a clear river, luring the hearer on from bend to bend through the soft beauties of its winding course." But avoidance of hiatus involved excessive care, and might easily become artificial. The perpetual seeking for symmetry in balanced clauses is apt to become tiresome. The great fault of his ample periods is monotony. They are too smooth, too polished, too stately. His rhetoric is "for the palaestra, not for the battlefield." Dionysius, comparing a passage from Isocrates' *De Pace*[2] with one from Demosthenes' *Third Olynthiac*,[3] finds the former a "display of graces," the latter a "stirring summons to action." Isocrates was greatly defi-

[1] *De comp. verb*, c. 23. [2] §§ 41–50. [3] §§ 23–32.

cient, the ancients agree, in that vehemence of oratory in which the feeling of the speaker fires his audience. The discourses were not only not meant to be spoken, they were not even adapted for declamation. Hieronymus, trying the experiment, found they would not bear delivery with raised tones or passion or gesture. "Isocrates had dropped his voice to the key in which a slave reads aloud to his master." His strongest claim upon our attention is that he was the founder of literary artistic prose. He was not a great orator. His chief merit is to have made possible the oratory of Demosthenes; but his greatest influence upon the oratory of the world was effected by means of Cicero, through whom the doctrine and the style of Isocrates have influenced the rhetorical and other prose not only of ancient but of modern times. "His beauty and his majesty are genuinely Greek," says Jebb; "and until the sense of these is wholly lost Isocrates must always rank as one of the great masters of expression." As Isocrates' oratory was epideictic, meant for display, we should look for its modern counterpart not to the courts or to parliament, but to the pulpit. It is there, as a French scholar pointed out, that we must go for something like the effect of Isocrates' periods, perhaps especially to Bossuet, who acknowledged indebtedness for his style to Plato, Demosthenes, and Isocrates.

There was one of Demosthenes' contemporaries — five years older — whom many of the ancients preferred to Demosthenes himself. This was Hyperides, "the Sheridan of antiquity." There was good ground for this popular preference. Hyperides had greater natural oratorical gifts, for he combined vehemence and force with ready wit and grace; he was as simple and natural and easy as Lysias, and could be as smooth and polished as his great master Isocrates. Besides, he might have been a great actor if he had chosen. We have to take his reputation mainly on faith, because the six orations which Egyptian papyri have restored to us in the past

century are so badly mutilated that no adequate judgment can now be formed of his excellences. But the ancients had fifty-two authentic speeches, and we have a great Greek critic's estimate based thereon. "Hyperides hits his mark neatly," says Dionysius, "but seldom lends grandeur to his theme. In the embellishment of his diction he has surpassed Lysias; in the astuteness with which he disposes his subject-matter he has surpassed all. Then he keeps to the issue throughout, and insists on the really strong points of his arguments. He commands the resources of a large intelligence; he has exquisite charm; and while he appears simple is no stranger to consummate art. He is especially to be imitated for the subtlety and symmetry of his narrations, as well as in respect to the avenues by which he approaches his case." [1]

But the fullest ancient notice of him is from the treatise *On Sublimity:* [2] "If merits were to be counted, not weighed, Hyperides would stand far before Demosthenes. He has more tones in his voice than Demosthenes, and a greater number of excellences. In fact, like the pentathlete, Hyperides is second-best all round; for the prize given in any branch, he comes after the specialists, but before the laymen. Besides imitating the merits of Demosthenes in everything except composition, Hyperides has further mastered in an eminent degree the excellences and graces of Lysias. He expresses himself in the plain manner where it is fitting — not with the sustained and unvarying tension of Demosthenes; and he has moral persuasiveness, with the flavor of an unstudied suavity. Incomparable wit plays about him; his sarcasm is in perfect keeping with political oratory; he is adroit with the weapons of irony; his jokes are not jarring, ill-bred, or importunate, in the 'Attic' manner of that generation; when he does pull to pieces, he does it neatly, with much humor, and with the pungency of well-aimed banter; and with all this, there is a beauty of style beyond imitation. He has

[1] *Vet. Script. Cens.*, V. 6.

[2] *De Sublimitate*, c. 34.

great power of pathos; in relating legends, he has a certain luxuriance, and a facile inspiration that wafts him most smoothly from point to point on his way."

But as Hyperides had many of the striking gifts of Fox and Sheridan, he had also many of their personal weaknesses. He lacked the great moral force that made Demosthenes supreme, and he did not spend himself on the composition of his discourses as did the author of the *De Corona*. But it is an immense pity that his speeches are lost or fragmentary; for, besides his grace and wit and polish, he is as easy to read as Bacchylides, and almost as charming as Simonides; so that he would probably have been the most popular of the Greek orators with modern readers. The best idea of his power and his charm may be gained through an extract from his *Funeral Oration* for Leosthenes and his comrades who fell in the Lamian War: "With us, and with all the living, they shall ever have renown; but in the dark under-world, suffer us to ask, who are they that will stretch a right hand to the captain of our dead? May we not deem that Leosthenes will be greeted with welcome and with wonder by those demigods who bore arms against Troy? . . . Aye, and there, I ween, will be Miltiades and Themistocles and those others who made Hellas free, to the credit of their city, to the glory of their names — men whom this man surpassed in courage and in council, seeing that *they* repelled the power of the barbarians when it had come against them, but *he* forbade its approach; *they* saw the foemen fighting in their own country, but *he* worsted his enemies on the enemy's soil. And surely they who gave the people trusty proof of their mutual love, Harmodius and Aristogeiton, will count no friends so near to themselves, or so faithful to you, as Leosthenes and those who strove beside him, nor will they so consort with any dwellers in the place of the dead. Well may it be so, since these have done deeds not less than theirs, but, if it may be said, even greater; for *they* put down the despots of their own city, but *these* put

down the despots of Hellas. O beautiful and wonderful enterprise, O glorious and magnificent devotion, O soldiership transcendent in dangers, which these men offered to the freedom of Greece!"

Then, turning to the kinsfolk of the dead, he concludes on this wise: "It is hard, perhaps, to comfort those who are in such a sorrow; grief is not laid to rest by speech or by observance; rather is it for the nature of the mourner, and the nearness of the lost, to determine the boundaries of anguish. Still we must take heart and lighten pain as we may, and remember not only the death of the departed, but the good name also that they have left behind them. We owe not tears to their fate, but rather praise to their deeds. If they came not to old age among men, they have the glory that never grows old, and have been made blessed perfectly. Those among them who died childless shall have as their inheritors the immortal eulogies of Greece; and those of them who have left children behind them have bequeathed a trust of which their country's love will assume the guardianship. More than this — if to die is to be as though we had never been, then these have passed away from sickness and pain and from all the accidents of earthly life; or if there is consciousness in the underworld, and if, as we conjecture, the care of the Divine Power is over it, then it may well be that they who have rendered aid to the worship of the gods in the hour of its imminent desolation are most precious to that Power's providence."[1]

Aeschines, the great rival of Demosthenes, five years his senior, was of humble origin. As a boy he seems to have assisted, as a sort of janitor, in his father's school; later he earned his living as scribe or secretary of certain inferior magistrates; then he became an actor, playing generally tritagonist parts; still later he was clerk of the Assembly. His experience as actor and as assembly-clerk was of great service to him in his preparation for a public career.

[1] The longer translations are all by Jebb.

In the one he got excellent training for public speaking; through the other he became familiar with Attic law and the procedure of the courts. He had most of the prime requisites of success as an orator, and prided himself on his natural faculty of eloquence. He was fine-looking and of imposing presence. His voice was magnificent and under perfect control. He had doubtless learned on the stage how effective for him was the statuesque pose of Pericles, so that when speaking in the Ecclesia he always refrained from vehement action, keeping his hand under his robe. He aimed at dignity, eloquence of manner, grace, and harmony, and the word εὐκοσμία (good order, in private and in public) was much on his lips. He piqued himself, too, on his culture, and was fond of quoting from the poets. His rhetoric was fluent, lucid, often vehement, and generally characterized by elegant gravity. His gift of narration or exposition is marked. He could assume a gayety and lightness that was foreign to Demosthenes. But he lacked his loftier thought and honesty of heart. The moral elevation that characterized Demosthenes was wanting.

It is impossible for us now to do justice to the eloquence of Aeschines, for during practically his whole public life he was, as the head of the Macedonian party, in direct antagonism to Demosthenes, and we come to him under the spell of the latter's vehement denunciation. We read his speech against Ctesiphon mainly for the light it may throw upon the reply in which Demosthenes defended at once himself and his mother-city. More than four-fifths of the jurors decided for Demosthenes then; the whole world sides with him now. For us Demosthenes is the patriot, and necessarily Aeschines, who, consumed with jealousy and hatred, opposed all that he did, bears much of the odium of the traitor.

If we could read them without prejudice, his three speeches, against *Timarchus*, on the *Embassy*, and against *Ctesiphon*, which are easy to read and have much interest and charm, (the "three graces," the ancients called them) would be

more popular. Time and space allow us here to give only a single specimen of his eloquence, and, in fairness to Aeschines, that should come from the peroration of the speech against Ctesiphon. "Had he closed that noble performance," says Lord Brougham, "before the last sentence, nothing was ever more magnificent than his peroration would have been. . . . Nothing prevented it from holding forever the place which the celebrated oath in Demosthenes holds at the head of all the triumphs of rhetoric, except that it was followed by this divine passage, to which its merit is little inferior, and to which it manifestly gave the hint."[1]

"And when at the end of his speech," says Aeschines, "he calls as his advocates those who shared his bribes, imagine that you see on this platform, where I now speak before you, an array drawn up to confront their profligacy — the benefactors of Athens: Solon, who ordered the democracy by his glorious laws, the philosopher, the good legislator, entreating you, with that gravity which so well became him, never to set the rhetoric of Demosthenes above your oaths and above the law; Aristides, — who assessed the tribute of the Confederacy, and whose daughters, after his death, were dowered by the State — indignant at the contumely threatened to Justice, and asking *Are you not ashamed? When Arthmios of Zeleia brought Persian gold to Greece, and visited Athens, our fathers well-nigh put him to death, though he was our public guest, and proclaimed him expelled from Athens, and from all the territory that the Athenians rule: while Demosthenes, who has not brought us Persian gold, but has taken bribes for himself, and has kept them to this day, is about to receive a golden wreath from you!* And Themistocles, and they who died at Marathon and Plataea, aye, and the very graves of our forefathers — do you not think they will utter a voice of lamentation if he who covenants with barbarians to work against Greece shall be — crowned?"

[1] Dissertation on the Eloquence of the Ancients.

Schoolboys know the stories which biographers of Demosthenes tell about his indomitable persistency in overcoming the difficulties that beset the path to the goal of his ambition — to be an orator: how with pebbles in his mouth he spoke against boisterous sea-waves; how he shut himself up in a grotto to work, shaving one side of his head to prevent his yielding to the desire for human company; how he copied all Thucydides eight times; how he was laughed at by the Assembly on his first appearance, but was consoled by an old man, who, remembering Pericles, said Demosthenes reminded him of the great Olympian, and was encouraged by an actor who found him moping about the Piraeus and who offered to give him lessons in elocution. These may be only pretty tales; but the fact is that physically he was greatly handicapped for the career of an orator. A delicate and sickly child of studious bent, he was sensitive and perhaps morbid, having no part in ordinary physical training; retiring, doubtless shy of the comradeship of boys, and keeping at home with his mother and younger sister, he grew up spare and rather delicate in frame, and was never in robust health. He must have had some sort of impediment of speech difficult to overcome. The term "water-drinker," applied to him by Aeschines, would suggest that he had to be careful of his diet; and the reproach of Aeschines, that he had never been a sportsman, certainly indicates that he was not athletic, and may imply neglect of exercise. At any rate he was inferior in physique and voice and ready speech to the stalwart and spontaneously eloquent Aeschines. But he had genius, and every difficulty yielded to that.

He may not have copied Thucydides eight times, but it is certain that he had been nourished by the study and moulded by the spirit of that philosophic historian. "He borrowed from him," says Dionysius, "his rapid movement, his terseness, his intensity, his sting." He may not have been actually a pupil of Isaeus, but the influence of Isaeus

was direct and strong. Another of his literary masters was certainly Isocrates. In matters of form — periodic sentence-structure, avoidance of hiatus, euphonic arrangement — Demosthenes learned much from the great rhetorician; but in the application of all that he learned his genius taught him to find a happy mean. The tradition that he was Plato's pupil, which has little evidence to support it, is perhaps only another instance of the perpetual attempt to associate great names in the relation of master and pupil. Cicero says that he read Plato studiously, even heard him, and had so stated in a letter.[1] Plutarch makes the same statement, on the authority of Hermippus, adding that he was much benefited in style by the lessons learned from Plato.[2] But as to direct indebtedness modern scholars are divided.

Certainly from both Plato and Isocrates he might have learned that the principles of ethics apply to states as well as individuals; that justice is binding on nations as well as on their citizens, even more binding on the former "by reason of their immortality." "Beware," he urged, "of exhibiting as a nation conduct which you would shrink from as individuals."[3] "It is not possible, Athenians," he says again, "it is not possible to found a solid power upon oppression, perjury, and falsehood. Such an empire may endure for the moment or for the hour; it may perhaps blossom with the rich promise of hope, but time finds it out, and it drops away of itself. As in a house, a vessel, or any similar structure, the foundations should above all be strong, so should the principles and ground-work of conduct rest upon truth and justice."[4] By both the rhetorician and the philosopher he would be strengthened in the conviction that the dignity of eloquence must be enhanced by giving it a moral content. According to Demosthenes the statesman must show a fearless sincerity and speak the truth at all costs; he

[1] Brut., 31, 121.
[2] Plut. *Demosth.* 5.
[3] *Contra Lept.* 136.
[4] *Olynth.* ii. 10.

must have a profound sense of responsibility; good intentions are not enough, a statesman must know what can be done when he advises the people — and all that he might have learned from the great Pericles as Thucydides represents him.

Demosthenes' first work, after the suit against his guardians, was writing speeches for the law-courts, the earliest of them in private or civil cases — mostly for others to speak — of which some nine or ten genuine ones are extant; but all that was, consciously or unconsciously, only a preparation for public life. His greatest speeches in political trials (*against Androtion, against Leptines, against Democrates, against Aristocrates*), are still more distinctly preludes to his political career. From his first close contact with public affairs in 355 B.C. to his death in 322 everything is grouped around his defense of Athens against the encroachments of Macedon. That is what the world knows him by. Some eighteen extant speeches — deliberative or forensic — belong to this period.

Demosthenes' speeches conform to the general Greek rules of arrangement. All have an exordium, narrative or statement of the case, argument, and peroration. But he is "studiously irregular; narrative, refutation, and proof are blended or displaced according to the requirements of the case." Here will be found directness of aim, a noble sincerity, moral elevation, every proof of minute and incessant diligence, close grappling with detail; further "a dramatic animation of manner, a quick interchange of question and answer, a pressing vehemence, sudden surprises, and novel turns of thought or phrase, an incisive irony." One especially praiseworthy peculiarity of his style Lord Brougham notes: "Not even in the beauty of collocation and harmony of rhythm is the vast superiority of the chaste, vigorous, and manly style of the Greek orators and writers more conspicuous than in the abstinent use of their prodigious faculties of expression. . . . Mark, I do beseech you, the severe simplicity, the subdued

tone of the diction, in the most touching parts of the old man eloquent's loftiest passages. In the oath when he comes to the burial-place where they repose by whom he is swearing, if ever a grand epithet were allowable, it is here — yet the only one he applies is *ἀγαθούς*." [1]

Demosthenes has pathos, but it is "austere and Thucydidean in its reserve." He has little humor, and is not jocose or witty. "No one ever laughs at Demosthenes' jokes except Ctesiphon," sneered Aeschines. He is always serious; if he has a fault, it is in this. Yet surely if a man ever had cause to be serious, it was Demosthenes. "Complete, but helpless prescience" — that characterizes Demosthenes. He clearly foresaw all that was coming, yet could not avert it. All that is in the face of the statue of the Vatican, a face that has always haunted me more than any other ever chiselled in marble. His was the voice of a lost cause that was right and of supreme importance, not to Athens only, but to the whole civilized world and to all coming ages.

The public career of Demosthenes may be divided into the period before and the period after the battle of Chaeronea. But there was something more and deeper than ordinary patriotism in his opposition to the encroachments of Macedon. The policy which led up to and ended in Chaeronea was simply the culmination of Demosthenes' life-purpose. "It is a mistake," says Professor Butcher,[2] "to think of him solely as the author of Philippics, or to allow the main episode to obscure the life. It was not the struggle with Macedon that gave a bent and purpose to his thoughts. From the outset it was his aim to revive public spirit in Athens. . . . He had studied the history of Athens and gathered from it all that was noblest in her past, uniting the elements in an ideal portrait, which became to him henceforth a power that moved his imagination and controlled his reason. This portrait of national

[1] *Inaugural Discourse* (*Speeches*, vol. iii. p. 87).
[2] Demosthenes, p. 140.

character he set before his countrymen as an object of loving imitation. Athens must identify herself with her best moments and be made to feel that she was never more truly herself than when at her grandest." In all that he was simply following the admonition of the great Pericles. "Fix your eyes," says the elder statesman, "upon the greatness of Athens until you become filled with the love of her, and in the presence of the spectacle of her glory reflect that this empire has been acquired by men who knew their duty and dared to do it."

In his early career he was, naturally, simply an Athenian, perhaps not seeing far beyond Attic borders. But after Philip's capture of Olynthus "the Athenian was sunk in the Hellene." His prophetic spirit had moved on "from the menaced independence of Athens to the vision of a death-struggle between barbarism and Hellenism, between lawless aggression on the one side and dignified freedom on the other." In such a struggle Athens was bound to be the champion of Greece; her whole past history pledged her to it. "Communities, like individuals," he said, "should ever strive to mould their futures by the noblest chapters of their past." [1] Plutarch says the Stoic Panaetius found that "the principle which appears in the greater number of the speeches of Demosthenes is that the honorable (τὸ καλόν) is to be chosen for its own sake." This spirit was the glory of Athens, and to preserve it was a higher duty than self-preservation; it was the proud distinction of Athens that there had been crises in her history when she staked her very existence. It was in recalling such crises that he rose to the moral height of the great oath. The statesman is responsible for prudent advice; the issues of events are with the gods. Had he misadvised Athens, had she made a mistake in opposing Philip? "I say that if the event had been manifest to the whole world beforehand, if all men had been fully aware of it, if you, Aeschines, who never opened your lips, had been never so loud

[1] *De Cor.* § 95.

or shrill in prophecy or in protest, not even then ought Athens to have forsaken this course, if Athens had any regard for her glory or her past or for the ages to come. Now, of course, she seems to have failed; but failure is for all when Heaven so decrees. . . . But never, Athenians, never can it be said that you erred when you took upon you that peril for the freedom and safety of all! No, by our fathers who met the danger at Marathon; no, by our fathers who stood in the ranks at Plataea; no, by our fathers who did battle on the waters of Salamis and Artemisium; no, by all the brave who sleep in tombs at which their country paid those last honors which she had awarded, Aeschines, to all of them alike, not alone to the successful or the victorious. And her award was just. The part of brave men had been done by all. The fortune experienced by the individual among them had been allotted by a power above man."

"Two thousand years have challenged," says Jebb, "a tradition which lives and will always live, wherever there is left a sense for the grandest music which an exquisite language could yield to a sublime enthusiasm — that when Demosthenes ceased, those who came from all parts of Greece to hear, that day, the epitaph of the freedom which they had lost, and a defense of the honor which they could still leave to their children, had listened to the masterpiece of the old world's oratory, perhaps to the supreme achievement of human eloquence." "At the head of all the mighty masters of speech," says Lord Brougham, "the adoration of ages has consecrated his place; and the loss of the noble instrument with which he forged and launched his thunders is sure to maintain it unapproachable forever."

As I have read or reread the Greek orators in the past few months the question has often occurred to me: How much is here offered that is indispensable to people of culture who are not Greek scholars? Antiphon, Isaeus, and Lycurgus, Greek scholars must know, in order to have a fair understanding of the de-

velopment of Greek oratory, including legal procedure. Antiphon has a further claim, as one who was admired by and who much influenced Thucydides. Isaeus' relation to Demosthenes gives him, too, a valid claim on our attention. Lycurgus, pupil of Isocrates and financial statesman, with his single extant speech, helps to illustrate the maturity of civil eloquence. But the man of culture who reads for the sake of literature might perhaps neglect these, even if he could still read Greek.

As to Lysias it is different. Not a great orator, but a consummate speech-writer and literary artist, he merits attention from a wider circle than Greek scholars — from all would-be public speakers who wish to acquire the difficult art of stating a case and of saying things simply, directly, and felicitously. Isocrates, too, deserves the study of public speakers, and of all who, like Walter Pater, wish to achieve an elaborate style in writing. A modern will perhaps tire of him sooner than of Lysias; but he is not for that reason to be neglected. If the orations of Hyperides were preserved in fairly good form, he would demand attention as much as Lysias, and would be more eagerly read. But Demosthenes — the most perfect orations of Demosthenes, *e.g.*, the *Third Philippic*, the *Chersonese* speech, and above all the *De Corona*, these are in Greek oratory of a class apart. They belong to the great literary creations of the world. Taken as a whole, and especially in the great passages that every one knows, they make the same impression as the *Agamemnon* and *Prometheus* of Aeschylus, the *Antigone*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, and *Ajax* of Sophocles, as Thucydides, much of Plato, the *Danaë* of Simonides, certain odes of Pindar, and Homer. "Such sermons feed me," an old friend used sometimes to say to me. Demosthenes's greatest passages feed the spirit and are tonic to the higher nature. Such is the thrill the classic masterpieces can still give.

CHARLES FORSTER SMITH.

PHILOSOPHY

It has long been customary to begin the history of philosophy with Thales of Miletus. Tradition places his birth in 640 B.C., and allows him the ripe age of ninety years. There were doubtless philosophers before him, but they have been forgotten so completely that Thales stands out in the imagination of many historians as a wonder in need of explanation, and has furnished the stimulus for much discourse about the origin of philosophy. His preëminence seems to rest, however, mainly upon a casual statement of Aristotle, who named Thales as the first of those who looked for the beginnings of things in water, air, or fire. There is considerable advantage in being named first by an authority. If you were not first before, you may be first forever after. It is the past, not as it was, but as it is recovered in the imaginations of men, that makes history. So if you ask the cosmos, the Greeks did not originate philosophy; but if you ask tradition, they did. Their originality is defined by the fact that they were so long believed to be original. If we knew their predecessors, that would help us to understand the Greeks and might alter their future reputation; but it could not alter the fact that for twenty-five centuries they have been the originators for the Western world of that peculiar kind of curiosity which we call philosophy. The course of events helped them wonderfully, but that was a characteristic of the course of events, the bare fact of the Greek habit of mind enduring amid vicissitude. We may therefore claim, using the words of a favorite Greek distinction, that while philosophy did not begin with the Greeks in the order of nature, it does begin with them in the order of ideas. First

they were not, but first they are. They achieved a distinction which nature had denied them.

Thales was their first philosopher. No undoubted word of his remains among the literary fragments of his time. He was a dim figure when men began to speak of him, yet you could paint his picture as readily as if he sat for your brush. With a shrewdness surpassing that of the Ionian farmers, he worked up a corner in the olive market. As an engineer he changed the course of a river and shaped a highway. He had a great reputation for political skill. Like all true philosophers, he was absent-minded, to the delight of the milkmaid who saw him fall into a pit while looking at the sky. He foretold an eclipse of the sun, and thus provided a sidereal date for historians. He wrestled with the calendar, observing the progress of the seasons, the yearly march of the sun, the summer and the winter solstice, the vernal and the autumnal equinox. By the aid of geometry he measured the distance of ships at sea, and determined the height of the pyramids from their own shadows. He attempted to explain the inundations of the Nile. He made the first recorded observation on electricity. And with creative imagination, suspicious of the permanency of things, he saw the earth rising to the surface of a primitive ocean, sustained and fed by its waters so that it blossomed and lived. From water it came and into water it would again disappear; when thoroughly dried by the heat of the sun, which process at times made it crack and quake, it would once more sink to be moistened and refreshed anew. Upon his tomb, we are told, the following inscription was written: —

> You see this tomb is small; but recollect
> The fame of Thales reaches to the skies.

Such is the Thales of history. Would he recognize his portrait? Probably not, but it is the privilege of the great to be painted.

Thales is typical of the half of Greek philosophy if we have in mind its dominant interests, for the Greeks cared very much about two things — the order of nature and the excellence of man. He was followed by a succession of eminent men to whom nature was ever fresh and interesting, and who pictured her with so much enthusiasm that at times they fell to singing. It is worthy of note that, in the long tradition about them, judgment is passed not only upon their opinions, but also upon their style, whether they told of nature in rough and untutored speech or with the accent of a finer voice. It is evident that they admired her. Since they regarded her whole-heartedly as furnishing man's abode wherein he stands upright and looks aloft to the stars, they did not charge her with inadequacy in providing and sustaining vision. She was self-contained. The hand of God had not shaped her, but the gods, if such there were, lived joyously and superbly in her pleasant places or moved darkly in her mysterious regions. Or she might herself be divine, embracing somehow the principle of divinity as the principle of her order and beauty, or as the perfect type of being whose essential excellence was her stimulus to productivity.

Thus Greek philosophy, addressing itself to the cosmos, was natural and free. It sought to discover the world's order, regarding the many indications of that order without disparagement or suspicion. It could distinguish between opinions which are hastily formed under the pressure of experience, and knowledge which is illuminated by pains-taking reflection. But it did not conceive itself as something different from science. Or we should rather say, perhaps, that the distinction between science and philosophy is one which would have amused the Greeks more than it would have enlightened them. Parmenides, it is true, thought he had found that short road to truth which the moderns call philosophy, a road which runs, as he tells us, far from the beaten track of men, avoiding such commonplaces as night and

day, the sun, the moon, and the stars, the genesis of man, living things, and the spectacular scenes of the cosmic play, but leading to the unshaken heart of persuasive truth, to the goddess of wisdom, whither the seeker may be carried by vigorous steeds whose breath is fire, and tended by radiant maidens whose seductions are wholly syllogistic. Thither coming as a suppliant before the fast-bound doors of truth's most distant dwelling-place, he may be allowed to enter and hear high discourse of being and non-being; and having learned that only being can be, he may return to the beaten track of men, in need of no higher information and quite sure that inquiry into the natural order of events is a little undignified. The immediate effect of the excursion of Parmenides seems to have been, however, to make men think about the indestructibility of matter, and not to drive the eager horses of the soul around the sphere whose centre is everywhere in general but nowhere in particular. Plato immortalized Parmenides by making a dialogue about him and affording scholars a rich opportunity for the writing of explanatory books; for Parmenides was too great a figure for the great dramatist of ideas to overlook. Indeed we may say it would have been a pity if the versatile Greek mind could not have produced at least one modern philosopher. Let us therefore set Parmenides down as an instance of that versatility, and accord him this praise, that since he would think about infinity, beginninglessness and endlessness, spacelessness and timelessness, and completeness so complete that its incompleteness completed, he none the less wrote of these things in hexameter.

Before Parmenides, Anaximander, a fellow-townsman of Thales and his pupil according to tradition, had made the perilous venture of the infinite. But he beheld it as the boundless reaches of space, diffused through which was a burning and steaming mist which tended to condense from

every direction toward the centre, so that at last the earth was formed there, a cylindrical mass, self-poised, in need of no support. Around it whirled masses of clouds through which flamed here and there the inclosed fires which men call the sun and moon and stars. Having got the earth, this man went on to conceive life as originating in the sea, and birds as fishes thrown out upon the land to change their fins to wings. And it seemed incredible to him that man had no prehuman history, for how could he have originated as a human infant and lived through his long infancy in the cosmic struggle without parental care? Through struggle living beings, he thought, attain the forms they have, so that it is only natural justice that at last all should return once more to the boundless source from which they came, in order that nothing should finally triumph in another's death. Let us remember that Anaximander was born 2521 years ago.

It would be a pleasure to go on from such beginnings and tell in detail the story of the Greek cosmologists: of Anaximenes, bending, as it were, before the great cosmic wind which blows the earth and planets through space, holds the stars nailed, as it seems, against heaven's dome, and by its thickening and thinning produces mist, rain, hail, and snow, and, banked up in masses on the horizon, sends back the sun's rays so reflected as to stretch a bow of colors over the earth; of Heraclitus, obscure in speech, but praising clarity of thought, for whom this cosmos, made neither by man nor God, was and is and will be fire everlasting, kindled according to measure and quenched according to measure, who sought in the universal conflagration the divine law by which the ever-changing things of the world are steered, the hidden harmony which to the mind is sweeter than any sounded music to the ear; of Empedocles and Anaxagoras, wrestling with the new-found notions of changeless matter and contriving force, the former finding love and hate, which others, in fear of being anthropomorphic, call attraction and repulsion, the

architects of nature, shaping her in an upward struggle through many haphazard, grotesque, and hideous forms to those shapes which now please the eye; and the latter finding intelligence at work wherever from out the intricate mixture of primal matter anything becomes distinguished; and of Democritus, who dissolved matter into space, so that matter became atomic in structure and possessed only of those natural movements which he conceived to belong to bodies left free, so that order and selection arose solely from the interference of material particles, until space was filled with systems of worlds, and man followed to look out upon it all and laugh for joy because the world could be such a merry dance and so beautiful, a fit place for the sayings of Democritus, which men have called golden, as "Strength of body is nobility in beasts of burden and strength of character is nobility in man." It would be a pleasure indeed to tell the story, but it would be only a part of Greek philosophy, the part which subsequent generations who knew not how to find nature inspiring neglected and preserved only by the way. The work of scholars has rescued many a fragment. We piece them together and, in our amazement at the resulting picture, wonder if it can possibly be correct. It may not be, but the greater wonder is that the pieces can make such a picture.

To speak of the Greek cosmologies as pictures is perhaps an appropriate figure. They look at this distance more like vast impressionistic sketches of the cosmos than the laborious study of definite and isolated natural processes. The Greeks lacked the instruments of experiment and precision which we possess. They seem to have used color lavishly and line little. They apparently liked sweep and disliked detail. If we knew more about them — and the fragments of Empedocles contain many startling and minute observations — we might think differently about them. But we know them only through tradition. That tradition leaves them as yet unsurpassed in fertile conceptions about the order of nature,

but leaves unchallenged for later ages the triumphs of experimental research. In thinking of these Greek pictures painted with a fine imagination, with a spontaneous and free love of natural things, and thinking also how men later had to recover nature through a bitter struggle, through the social ostracism of many a scholar, through imprisonment, torture, and even death, against the charge of infidelity and of corrupting all that is ennobling in human life, one feels that there has been a tragedy in the life of thought. Athens, it is true, loved not the cosmologist. She persecuted Anaxagoras because he said that the sun was a rock on fire, and Plato pictures Socrates disgusted with his book; but no scholar is recorded as wishing to destroy him or his writings.

Yes, Athens loved not the cosmologist. She loved man — not, however, man in general, but Athenians first and other Greeks when necessary. Yet she loved so well that her admiration begot conceptions universal in their vision, even if she denied their application to slaves and barbarians. The philosophy of Athens is humanistic through and through. Even Aristotle, who performed the astonishing task of bringing all Greek philosophy together in one imposing system, never forgets the supreme emphasis on man. Many historians who can conceive a given philosophy only as somehow the outcome of a preceding philosophy have seen in Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle a reaction against Democritus and his predecessors, against a demoralized situation in life and thought which the cosmologists had created. But the dates alone make such a conception highly improbable. Democritus and his predecessors, with very few exceptions, lived and died in the colonies of Greece. Attic philosophy was city-born and city-bred. It grew out of society, politics, and education, and not out of contemplation of the stars or of the order of nature. It was philosophy taking a fresh start because human relations had become acute and interesting, not because speculations about nature had produced

chaos. Attic philosophy is thus in its beginning not a development of Greek philosophy, an evolution out of preceding systems. Its roots are elsewhere, in the city streets, by the dinner-table, in the theatre, the courts, the market-place. It is of a city grown conscious that she has beaten the Persian and become mistress of her own destiny.

It was a townsman and contemporary of Democritus, the Sophist Protagoras, who went to Athens and said, "Man is the measure of all things." He probably did not intend to condense a theory of knowledge into an epigram or to invite men to embrace a purely individualistic standard of morals. The remark was bold, but not cryptic. It indicated that since the measure of things is taken by man, the methods and standards of measurement should be the chief objects of human interest and the important factors in education. He seems indeed to have been about the first professional educator, and consequently deserves much praise and much blame. He did not propose to make young men competent artisans, tradesmen, or statesmen, but he proposed to make them good, to improve their manners, address, and conversation, to perfect their measuring ability, to make them wise without compelling them to master anything but themselves. He regarded all this as very important, and called the teaching of it the teaching of virtue, just as we call it the giving of a liberal education. He was very much admired, and parents paid him large sums for his services. He had many imitators. Young men in those days apparently desired to be made virtuous, and there was profit for the makers. So the Sophists prospered. Their prosperity, however, led them into corruption, so that to-day they are seldom regarded as the proper model for teachers. Yet were Protagoras alive, I doubt not that he would be the leading professor of philosophy in the world.

Historians have paid too much attention to the character of the Sophists and too little to their existence. But their

existence was the significant thing. It points to the fact that the Greeks wanted to be the makers, not only of cosmologies or of beautiful buildings and statues or of immortal verses, but also of superior men. It points to a social eagerness for excellence. But there is considerable danger in teaching young men after the manner of Protagoras, the danger of cleverness and superficiality, of self-assurance without clarity of mind, of producing virtuosity instead of virtue. Socrates felt this danger keenly. He had a strange affection for young men, a curious combination of the father, the mother, and the sweetheart. He worried about their destinies, and he liked simply to look at them and have them near. To him there was nothing more attractive than beautiful youths with eager minds. It is just because they have minds that they are in danger of missing something, of running off on the wrong track, for the mind it is which makes the estimate of life. That the estimate is made in ignorance Socrates knew. He had tried the fact out by asking others and by searching his own soul. He was conscious that he had no knowledge to impart, but he could not leave young men, for he loved them too well. So he bound them to him by making them suspicious of the traditional sources of knowledge and by stimulating in them a restless intellectual hunger. Because it was he who created the appetite, they looked to him for its satisfaction, and he kept them busy making it keener. They always came so near the truth that they would surely have it the next time. They thus became more dependent on him than on the truth itself. Plato's *Phaedo* may not be history, but it is dramatically true. Socrates was about to die. His death meant the greatest possible loss. Was there any compensation? There might be if the soul could not die, if Socrates were going only on a journey, and death did not mean to be utterly gone. So they talk about immortality and try hard to be convinced. But Socrates is cautious. He will not be too sure. His great

hold on them has been to keep them thinking, yet he would now make them sure if he could, and certainly one can be sure of being ready for the truth when found. But the cup of hemlock is too strong an argument. They go away from that last scene broken men, suffering an irreparable loss. There was no Socratic philosophy, and that is why all efforts to state it fail. There was only a man who could never be forgotten.

Among the followers of Socrates was a youth named Aristocles. Men dubbed him Plato for two good reasons, his breadth of back and his breadth of mind. He was born appropriately upon Apollo's birthday. He tried, however, to escape his manifest destiny by turning philosopher, but never quite succeeded, unless we are paradoxical enough to see in him philosophy's greatest success. There is a story that he wrote plays before he met Socrates, but after that meeting burned them, and the strange conclusion has been drawn that he made plays no longer. To explain, however, why his writings are dialogues, ingenious scholars have supposed that he was in the habit of asking questions of his pupils and reproduced his practice in literary form. In justification of their opinion it should be stated that their own method of teaching was probably different. It is far saner, if we are going to use our imagination in the matter, to suppose that for the young Plato the spectacle of Socrates, the ugly and penniless Sophist, holding the youth of Athens enraptured in a philosophical argument which could never end, but must be interrupted by the intrusion of affairs, was a spectacle more dramatic than any he had yet conceived. And surely there are possibilities enough in the eager search for truth on some pleasant afternoon with congenial friends, when one seems to have all the time there is, and the argument has carried us far away from the worries and details of life into a clear and untroubled atmosphere where the prize hovers, the secret our souls covet, and then, just as we are about to grasp

it, it eludes us, or life intervenes with a trivial or a weighty call. Plato's philosophy is the mind's aspiration thwarted by circumstance and its own subtlety. Its literary form had to be dramatic.

Committed thus to the dramatization of the conflict of ideas, Plato depicted the comic and tragic in the life of thought. His sweep is wide, but he likes best the themes distinctly human. He makes generals discourse on courage, Sophists on wisdom, rhetoricians on rhetoric, psychologists on the soul, friends on friendship, politicians on politics, the pious on piety, and it is usually the play of ideas rather than the conclusion which absorbs him. So if we look for a system of philosophy in Plato, we shall probably not find it; but if we look for none, we may find most of the philosophies ever written. That is why those who call him master are so often unwilling to call one another disciples, and there is consequently nothing so Platonic as the spectacle of Platonists contending. The greatest tribute I have ever heard paid to his versatility is the assertion that "all that is good in Aristotle is Platonic, and yet Aristotle thoroughly misunderstood his master."

It is impossible in one lecture on the whole of Greek philosophy to speak of Plato's contributions. It might be sufficient to note that he makes philosophy necessary for every one who reads him, and that he has produced more philosophers than anybody else. But I should not leave him without some expression of the things which are found in him perennially significant. I turn to the *Republic*. It is an odd city which Plato would have us build, a little town secured from invasions from without, with the people told a pleasant myth about their natural capacities, with all property in the hands of the state, with women the equals of men in all but strength of body, with a scarcity of poets because only those who speak the truth are to be allowed, with everybody adjusted to his proper work, with no families, but with

the citizens perpetuated through the idyllic mating of the choicest youths and maidens, with no opportunity for pastry-cooks and consequently none for physicians, with a system of education adequate to keep everybody free from corruption, and with my colleagues and me to manage it all. It is an odd state, providing much that we all hope for and daring much which in later years many have gladly approved. Plato may have taken it literally, but I doubt it. The young men he kept discussing it with Socrates all day long made him admit it was impracticable, and that it could exist perhaps only in heaven; and they drove him at last to tell them a story to divert their insistent questions and send them away thinking of the perfect city in heaven and the life of man on earth. The story is itself a commentary on the *Republic*. It tells how a man named Er paid a visit to the other world and returned to report how he had seen the souls there choose their lot for their next pilgrimage on earth. "He who had the first choice drew near and at once chose the greatest tyranny; his mind having been darkened by folly and sensuality, he did not well consider and therefore did not see at first that he was fated among other evils to devour his own children. But when he came to himself and saw what was in his lot, he began to beat his breast and lament over his choice. Instead of blaming himself as the author of his calamity, he accused chance and the gods and everything rather than himself. Now he was one of those who came from heaven, and in a former life had dwelt in a well-ordered state; but his virtue was a matter of habit only, and he had no philosophy. And this was more often the fortune of those who came from heaven, because they had no experience of life: whereas in general the dwellers upon earth, who had seen and known trouble, were not in a hurry to choose."[1] How inconsistent, we exclaim, to put his city in heaven as the perfect pattern of goodness and then to assert that those

[1] Jowett's translation.

who come from heaven are hasty, rash, and tyrannous, while those who have experienced the troubles of earth are cautious and sane! But with Plato such is human life — to see the glories of heaven and need the discipline of earth. That, I believe, is why he made Socrates the hero of his plays, as the man who suffered and the man who saw. It is no wonder that some of the Church Fathers thought that Plato must have been a Christian, or that his philosophy could be described in words borrowed from his own *Phaedo* as a meditation on death.

There is that in Plato, but there is much besides, for the vision of the perfect city in heaven evokes more than the baffled cry of human experience. The *Republic* is a confident summons to read the virtues of the individual in the larger letters of virtue socially conceived. Plato solves too light-heartedly the civic and social problems with which men have been busy ever since they began trying to live together. His thought moves confined by the limited boundaries of the Greek city state and the traditional and aristocratic classification of its citizens. His city is military, not economic and industrial. In his later years he planned to tell how that city would conduct itself in war, as if in such conduct its supreme excellence would be disclosed. Those who entertain the ideal of a successful democracy are offended by his paternalism and his contempt for the men who toil, the creatures whom God made mostly of clay. Yet through these limitations of time and place and circumstance runs the conviction that it is futile to place any great confidence in individual virtue unless it is the reflection of a virtuous social order. For man is the maker of cities, and is to be judged by the kind of city he makes. The types of government and the types of man go hand in hand. Are men just, courageous, temperate, and wise? Look to their city. That is Plato's challenge to civilization, a challenge which knows no limitations of time or place or circumstance.

There is a similar universality in Plato's ideas on education. We may be amused at students who try to master astronomy while they neglect the stars. We may doubt that mathematics is the best medicine for the mind. We may be suspicious of the civic efficiency of philosophers trained principally in dialectic. Many a detail may look absurd if we take it seriously. What Plato desires to have us take seriously, however, is his conviction that education can promote civic virtue only as by some means or other it succeeds in fixing attention on the impersonal and the general. Nothing, he urges, is clearly understood unless it is understood in its context and seen in its relations. That is why if the minds of the young are tied to the isolated and detached, no proper estimate of anything is attained, and the desires and emotions become enslaved to the immediate and the temporary. And that is why philosophy is needed in education and should be its life, insisting everywhere that there is a context apart from which there is no intelligent reading of a single word in the book of nature or in the book of man. To know is to get at the meaning of those books, to find out what ideas they contain. It is not to count their words or to make an index.

Plato's theory of education and his theory of ideas are the same thing under different names. For individual things are but the incitements to the comprehension of what they amount to, what they express and illustrate, what they perform, what they signify, to what they point. Only as we thus comprehend them can we tell what they are. Nothing else suffices, but this suffices to reveal to an open mind a hint, perhaps the vision, of the pattern which their meanings make. It is a wonderful pattern, Plato would have us believe, for which no fashion of human speech can be too exalted; for when seen it discloses how each thing, even the commonest, is an indication of a perfect and abiding type, and how these types themselves point to that idea of good "which is the cause of all that is beautiful and right, parent in the

visible world of light and its lord the sun, and in the world of mind the sovereign source of intelligence and truth."

To turn from Plato to Aristotle is to turn to a rather tiresome mass of technical terms, labored definitions and distinctions, frequent repetitions, cross-references, unfulfilled promises of more on the same subject, and the absence, except in very occasional passages, of anything like literature. The first impression one is apt to receive is that here is a rather crude attempt to glorify the obvious. We are told that it is better to be well than to be ill; therefore the best man will be healthy. It is better to be rich than to be poor; therefore the best man will not be poor. It is better to live to a ripe age than to die in infancy; therefore the best man will be mature. It is better to live in society than in solitude; therefore the best man will be a citizen and have intimate friends. Men are distinguished from other animals by possessing reason; therefore the best man will be a reasoner; he will live rationally and exercise his rational faculty for the pleasure of it. But this is not very thrilling, we exclaim. Yet it is very sensible, Aristotle replies. But we want to be enthusiastic. That is just the trouble, says Aristotle; too many people prefer enthusiasm to sense. And we look out on life and find it so, and realize that we have fallen into the hands of a physician.

But with Aristotle as a whole it is the world's case that is diagnosed — not that we are to suppose that the world is ill, but that it is the business of philosophy to get at its structure and its functions, its anatomy and its physiology, so to speak. For the world, on account of its ceaseless productivity, is not unlike a living being. What it is, therefore, what it does, how it does it, and with what results, are the kind of questions which it is profitable to ask. If they could be truthfully answered, the answers would constitute just that intellectual achievement which the reason of man so much desires and which seems to be reason's most significant enterprise.

For that enterprise, however, no single science is sufficient, because nature is too manifold and diverse. Often she is wayward, hiding her processes from the inquisition which would force her into unvarying regularity. Knowledge must recognize, therefore, that it can deal only with the general and the usual, and that there are factors irreducible to law. Yet even so, it must also recognize that in the field of the general and the usual there are differences of aspect and of operation which cannot be expressed in any common terms. So we find in Aristotle a system of sciences, each with its own special field assigned and with its relation to its fellows determined. Physics, psychology, anatomy, physiology, natural history, politics, rhetoric, ethics, poetics, mathematics, logic, metaphysics, sometimes as elaborate treatises and sometimes as special monographs on chosen topics — we find them all, the great and almost single source of Europe's information for centuries. Much of his work has no present significance or value, but much of it still remains a living contribution to current thought. Would you write on rhetoric or art, on psychology or ethics, on logic or metaphysics, on politics or the constitution of states, you will not slight the Stagirite if you are wise. And slighting him is hardly possible, he is so intricately connected with the whole structure of scholarship. He is responsible for the long life of many an error; he has ensnared many a feeble mind by affording it a terminology which could be made a substitute for thought; but, taken all in all, he is one of the intellectual marvels of history.

Among the Aristotelian writings, the misnamed *Metaphysics* has a unique place. It is, like the other sciences, restricted in its scope, inadequate for the grasp of nature in her complexity. Yet it has a universality which none of these possesses, for all objects of all thought fall within its domain if we will conceive them stripped of those special and peculiar characters which demand separate study for their

comprehension. If there are any propositions true of all things in spite of their variety, if anything can be said of nature which is applicable to her as nature simply, rather than as nature qualified and diverse, these propositions and sayings will constitute a science at once restricted and universal. Or we may observe that since only a system of sciences is adequate to the understanding of nature, those features of nature which make this necessary may themselves be scrutinized and formulated. Now that which is most generally characteristic of things is motion, but motion not restricted to movement from place to place. It comprises such processes as growth, decay, and qualitative change, so that with Aristotle the germination of a seed and the generation of a thought are as much motion as the revolution of a planet. This motion is itself the principle of diversification, and is concretely given in the ceaseless transformations of nature, so that nature may be generally conceived in terms of matter and form. But the conception must provide for the transition of matter into forms not yet realized, for it is just such transitions that we observe. Form and matter are not welded together as two metals might be forced to unite. The stone *becomes* a doorstep, the boy a man, the man a general. Motion is forward, progressive, productive, and it is ceaseless. We are not to think of it as once beginning and by and by to end, but we should rather think of it in its own terms, making the fact of transition itself the initial and important fact. With Aristotle, however, motion, just because it is transition, is not self-sustained. We may not think of matter, even if we endow it with the capacity for all possible forms, as shaping itself, nor of form molding matter, as by a contriving hand. The transition must be mediated, and in the works of man's art it is mediated by the interposition of man himself as an efficient and designing factor. But the observation cannot be transferred to nature without modification, since we find there no artist at work and no evidence of a designing

power. Indeed, human efficiency itself presents in its own terms the situation we find in nature, for man's activity is also that motion of transition from what is now to that which shall be hereafter. But it contains at least this clue: man's activity is evoked by the presence in him, realized in thought, of that result he would attain. That presence does not cause his hands to move nor guide his tools; it is no substitute for his muscles; but it is that without which the movements of his hands would be merely local and unproductive. Democritus might appear to be satisfied with a world where things in the last analysis only change their relative positions; but for Aristotle, if such a change is at the same time the movement of matter into form, the transition of the possible into the actual, of stuff into a finished and different work, of a seed into a flower and a germ into a man, there must be in nature some factor whose presence has power to evoke activity and keep it continuously sustained. "On such a principle heaven and earth depend. Its life is always such as is ours in those brief moments when our life is at its best." In these words Aristotle speaks of what his master Plato called the good, and joins him in the Greek refusal to think of nature's ultimate meaning in less exalted terms.

Aristotle's philosophy is thus a philosophy of nature, a cosmology once more, rich in its allusions to the past, grounded in the history of Greek thought and developed from it. Greek philosophy did not die with him, but it never surpassed him — so completely, it would seem, did he realize the Greek conception of nature as a living process the significance of which is to be understood in the light of what it achieves. Modern philosophers have rarely understood this Greek conception of nature. Long habituated to see in final causes either evidence of the existence and activity of God or a silly substitute for mechanical forces, they have looked for the significance of nature in theology or in physics, turning the life of man into a religious problem or a chemical

formula. With Aristotle the significance of nature is seen in her products. We may discover how these are produced, but we should not conceive them to exist for the sake of proving that there is a God or that there are mechanical laws. If they prove anything at all, they prove nature's capacities, point to her possibilities, demonstrate that she can generate and support the ideal. That she works by mechanical means, Aristotle never doubts. But he sees in mechanism instrumentation only. Since nature does produce, and there was consequently a time when any specific product did not yet exist, that time is inadequately conceived unless it is prospectively conceived. The future is ideally in it, waiting, as it were, for the quickening stimulus to live. Thus, as Santayana puts it, with Aristotle "everything ideal has a natural basis and everything natural an ideal development."

Yet Aristotle is a humanist. It is man that thinks of nature after this fashion, and the world with which philosophy deals is consequently man's world. All things exist for man. This splendid Greek presumption sounds boastful to ears accustomed to conventional and professional modesty. With Aristotle, however, it is only the statement of an obvious fact. He did not think that all things were made for man, nor that philosophy is necessarily tainted with anthropomorphism, important only as a human pastime. He thought it quite obvious that of all nature's products man is the one who most successfully comprehends her. But since she produced him, his own natural significance cannot be less than that of his discoveries. There are two types of philosophy which for Aristotle are preposterous, — the one which can view nature as a play where man is only a spectator or a shifter of the scenes, and the one which seeks a significance for human life apart from the natural history of man and a vision of his possibilities.

There is no more to tell, unless one should go on to recount how Greek philosophy still lived, unsupported by the na-

tional life which gave it birth, to be adopted by other peoples and adapted to other needs. It was its fate to become a philosophy which men should study and lecture about. What its permanent elements are, I do not know, and so I have not ventured to state. Yet I may end with this assertion: as a student of philosophy, I know of no period in the history of human thinking which so well repays study, which so sustainingly quickens the mind and encourages the soul. There may be greater philosophical conceptions than those the Greeks have left us, but I know not where they are unless they are in the future. Their attainment I can believe to be possible only after we have recovered, as a habitual possession, the Greek conception of nature which conceives her as adequate for man's outlook because she has been adequate for his production. The Phaedrus of Plato closes with a prayer offered by Socrates, standing under a spreading plane-tree on a grassy slope above the cool and limpid Ilissus, in the shade of blooming and fragrant agnus castus, and with the air summerlike and clear, alive with the song of the cicalas: —

> Dear Pan, and other gods who may be here, grant that I may grow beautiful within. May what I have with what I am be friendly. May I count the wise man rich, and let my store of gold be such as only a sober man could take as his spoil.
>
> Do we need anything else, Phaedrus? For me this is prayer enough.

FREDERICK J. E. WOODBRIDGE.

HELLENISTIC LITERATURE

Our notions of what is peculiarly Greek are obtained almost exclusively from the masterpieces of Greek art and literature in the classical period. This is largely due to an accident in the transmission of Greek literature. If the interests of the earlier part of the Christian era had led to the preservation of large masses of prose and poetry from the centuries which form the subject of this chapter, it would not be possible, without danger of contradiction, to describe the Greeks as a people singularly serene and sane, to isolate them from other races by virtue of their sense of proportion and exquisite taste. As it is, the art of Sophocles and his contemporaries embodies all that is distinctively Greek to the layman of to-day. For most readers, the three centuries preceding the birth of Christ mark a violent change. An aftermath, an evening glow, its colors now subdued, now brilliant, suggesting the disappearance of a greater light rather than the coming of any new splendor — the Hellenistic or Alexandrian period even to-day stands in the minds of many people, including classical students, for decadence. The term "purist" stamps the morbidly pure; "Hellenistic" seems to suggest to some students of literature a diseased form of the truly Hellenic. On the contrary, the work of these later centuries is wholesome and of peculiar significance, not so elevating as the odes of Pindar and the dramas of Sophocles, yet of no less, but different import to the modern reader.

The Greek world conquered by Alexander lost the equipoise of earlier days; in social life it became unregulated, dissolute; in artistic expression it lacked the dignity and

restraint that set the Greeks apart from other races in isolated grandeur — up to recent times this was the conventional estimate. The historian of the period begrudged it praise, reminded his readers that every age of great achievement is succeeded by a period of depression, that the glory of the Elizabethans makes later centuries seem dull and drab, and in general that once literary standards have been established there is nothing left to accomplish but slavish imitation, elaboration of rules of art, and listless mechanical application of such canons to the old themes, with such inventiveness as is possible in the refinement of details, — that very refinement killing all vigor and spontaneity.

To-day the Hellenistic period, and, in general, the later centuries of Greek life and thought, are occupying our attention more largely than the classical period. The discoveries of papyri in Egypt are slowly filling in the tremendous gaps in Hellenistic literature. With new zest the student of religion is finding in these later days the seed-ground of Christianity. The history of language, of ancient law and political organization, is set in a new light. The student of literature is moved to look more deeply into the scanty remains of artistic literary expression, to view them and the life which they portray with a cheerful optimism bred of historical insight, to renounce the depreciatory estimate of earlier historians and substitute a reasonable appreciation of what these artists achieved. They are no longer to be regarded as a degenerate stock, but as a natural and inevitable development, perhaps inferior to the earlier growth, but at least a development, and desirable for the best good of future generations.

In the days of the great tragedians of the fifth century, Greek society was split up into a number of small municipal units — Athens, Sparta, Corinth, Thebes — city-states, as we now call them, each essentially independent, though by turns securing supremacy for a time over the other city-states.

Each city-state was compactly organized, each individual under the constraint of an absolute family government, each family linked indissolubly to other families of the same tribe, the various tribes forming a close corporation — the city-state. In such an organization, the attitude of the individual toward the various duties and privileges of citizenship is very different from what it is in modern society. Much as he may gain from the consciousness of being a member of the body politic, the average citizen easily becomes part, and a very small part, of a large machine; a considerable portion of his life is absorbed in involuntary service; the state is omnipotent; individual initiative is circumscribed. Moreover, whatever intellectual or industrial liberty may as the result of general enlightenment be open to him, the beginning and the end of his daily experience and effort are found almost invariably in the small municipality. Any widening of his horizon, any attempt to construct a larger sphere of activity for himself and his fellows, involves a disruption of the compact organism of which he is an infinitesimal part. One of these municipalities, Athens, furnishes the literature of the fifth and part of the fourth centuries, the literature to which we refer as characteristic of the best Greek product. This literature is a local product, and reflects the ideas of a small number of people of very remarkable equipment; the product can continue only so long as this city-state continues; by reason of its size, isolation, and the limits it sets to individual achievement, the city-state cannot hope for long life. The best that may be hoped is that the ideas and the form of expression may be transmitted to others, but in the very act of transmission, the form and the content of the literature must change with the changed social and political conditions of the new era.

This aggregate of political units, independent of one another, and continually at odds with one another, the

master-minds of Philip and Alexander of Macedon found it easy to convert into a monarchy. Just before the beginning of our period the new monarchy is firmly entrenched, and the Macedonian conqueror has not only begun to organize the Greek city-states into a new and larger national unity, but has forced his way into foreign lands, conquering as he goes, carrying with him Greek armies and Greek influence, disseminating Greek culture among peoples hitherto known to the Greeks as barbarians. The tremendous extent of Alexander's conquests made it necessary to expand the means of communication between remote parts of the new empire; military routes were established in the course of conquest; commercial routes followed the path of conquest; the remote East and the remote West were made accessible to each other. Meantime the change from city-state to monarchy resulted, to the municipality, in a release from bondage. In varying degrees in various communities, individual opportunity is widened. The Greek is no longer confined in his ambitions and in his daily experience to his city-state; he follows with interest the adventures of his fellow-countrymen in Asia Minor and Egypt; often he sallies forth from his native city to establish himself along the new paths of communication opened up as the result of conquest. Plato and Aeschylus did indeed travel; now more often the average citizen travelled, carrying with him the heritage of ideas and ideals that Plato and Aeschylus conceived or transmitted. In this new contact of Greek and barbarian, the Greek spirit becomes an animating force infused into the chaotic mass of non-Greek peoples. Civilization is no longer limited to Greece with Athens as its centre. Greek intermarries with barbarian, assimilates his religious views and rites, modifies his own local dialect under the influence of other Greeks from other localities with whom he is thrown; there ensues an amalgamation of Greek with Greek, and of Greek with barbarian, that affects all

literature written in Greek; it is now a world-literature, no longer Athenian literature.

The centre of interest in this new cosmopolitan age is the individual man. Biography emerges as a recognized literary type. History, in the hands of Polybius, becomes a study of great personalities. Philosophy throws emphasis upon individual ethics, constructs the ideal wise man. Comedy turns from the political and social problems of the city-state to universal phases of individual experience. Love-poetry as a frank expression of personal feeling recovers the position once gained for it by Alcaeus and Sappho. In literary technique, character-treatment is successfully initiated, though never becoming so deeply introspective as in modern literature. Even the artist's own personality is more often intruded in the poetry of this period than earlier.

Next in importance to the individual are the tangible concrete objects that surround him. The impetus given to individual freedom and the new world suddenly opened to an already intelligent people resulted in a predominant interest in the realities of the immediate environment. This realism in its wholesome manifestation is a faithful reproduction of action and object, but naturally enough it often tends to reproduce the sordid and base as well as the sublime and elevating. It is this phase of realism, combined with disproportionate emphasis on detail and a lack of feeling for some other qualities of the classical form, that leads to misinterpretation of the art of the period. Wholesome or unwholesome, it is not decadent, but an inevitable evolution. Social experience has widened, and the first reaction upon the new experience cannot produce a literature that detaches the realities from life and idealizes them. The interpretation of concrete environment rather than photographic reproduction is the goal, but as yet somewhat distant. Even in this period, the beginnings of an effort to

elevate to idealize, are discernible; Theocritus is a very different sort of realist from Herondas.

It does not impair the essential truth of these generalizations if one points to traces of cosmopolitanism, of individualism, of realism in the life and thought of the fifth century before these social and political changes were inaugurated. Euripides is the great forerunner of the Hellenistic period. In Plato, in Xenophon, in Isocrates, one may find the seeds of many a fruitful growth in the succeeding centuries. So, too, in another direction the classical period leads the way to an important change in the thought and practice of later days. The Ionic philosophers and the enlightened discussion of fundamental problems at Athens toward the end of the fifth century tended to undermine religious faith. Even at that time, individuals questioned the content of myths, doubted the efficacy of worship, denied the existence of the Olympian gods. The broadening of experience in the next centuries naturally led to the spread of skepticism. Now the average citizen loses much of his faith in the gods of the old era, in the forms of worship, in the myths. Yet the new age is not irreligious. New conditions require new ways of satisfying the old need of the gods. To some extent the weakening of belief in the Olympian gods simply issued in a more receptive attitude toward non-Greek divinities; the new contact with foreign peoples brought a more intimate acquaintance with foreign, and particularly Oriental cults; emotional needs were readily gratified by the adoption of orgiastic rites and of religious doctrine permeated with mysticism; for this, again, the fifth century had prepared the way. But a more significant result of skepticism was the attempt to explain away the supernatural elements of orthodox belief; the gods were accounted for as human beings whose great achievements justified deification; and once this was granted, there was nothing in the way of deifying the great contemporary cap-

tains whose exploits in the present seemed to distinguish them as benefactors of mankind; not only, then, does the Hellenistic Greek appropriate foreign cults, not only does he lower gods to the position of deified human beings, but he exalts Alexander and his marshals to godship. The full significance of the movement is somewhat exaggerated in the flippant paean of praise that greeted Demetrius Poliorcetes on his arrival at Athens: "As the sun and the stars thou appearest to us with thy companions, as the child of Poseidon and Aphrodite. The other gods are far remote, or do not exist at all, or do not hear us, but thee we see eye to eye, not in wood or stone, but in the flesh. Therefore we pray thee give us peace: for thou art our Lord and Master." Skepticism, however, finds still another outlet. As a substitute for the Divine Will, for Providence, it exalts Fate or Fortune, and regards human activity as subject only to a despotic or capricious mistress. In all these various efforts to meet the needs of the new nation one discerns the influence of contemporary philosophy and a characteristic attempt to adapt the older beliefs to new conditions, to avoid an absolute break with the past; the rationalizing of the gods and the deification of men is in consonance with the ideas of the older generation in worshipping heroes after death; the supremacy of Fate was a notion fostered in some philosophical schools.

Cosmopolitanism, individualism, a universal intelligent interest in the affairs of a large world, unrestricted freedom to initiate, to develop; realism, rationalism, absorption in the men and things of the known world, a matter-of-fact explanation of the unknown in simple accordance with the hard realities of the known world — these are dominant characteristics of the Hellenistic period.[1] In our own modern life very similar conditions prevail. Hellenistic literature

[1] The general characteristics of the Hellenistic period are more fully treated in Wendland, *Die hellenistisch-römische Kultur*, Tübingen, 1907.

is, with some obvious qualifications, essentially modern; the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, all the intervening centuries, have enriched our experience. But in contrast with the dramas of Aeschylus and Sophocles, a play of Menander, an idyl of Theocritus, is modern in so far as the general reader may approach and enjoy it without readjustment. The content, excepting certain obvious universal truths, and the form of the *Prometheus Bound*, of the *Antigone*, of the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, or any other masterpiece of the Golden Age of Greek Literature, are clearly intelligible only to him who with patience and sympathetic interest transposes himself into the environment of the Athenian of the fifth century and tries to visualize the life and comprehend the thought of the city-state. A play of Menander, the Syracusan idyl of Theocritus, the romance of Jason and Medea, are almost immediately intelligible to every modern reader.

The modernness of Hellenistic prose and poetry makes it impracticable to define its qualities in general terms. Modernness is equivalent to complexity. Hellenistic literature is a complicated phenomenon. It becomes difficult to describe any literary type, most of all the literature as a whole: simple naturalism over against pretentiousness and pomposity; here brutal realism, there pictures detached from life, conventionalized or dimly idealized; the idyllic peace of the country side by side with the bustle of city life. One poet expresses his thought with lucidity and grace, another not only with awkwardness, but with a conscious attempt to hide the thought in a maze of riddles. One poem shows all the restraint and dignity peculiar to the classical period; another is lavish of detail, indulges in digression, and digression within digression, revels in rhetorical ornament and in false emotion. One poet is a Sicilian and reveals the simple manners and poetic imagination of Sicilian peasantry; another is a scholar at Alexandria who has spent his life in explaining the meaning of Homer; he in-

trudes unrelated scraps of learning, or at best helps to visualize the splendor and pomp of Alexandria, the new metropolis of the new Greek world. Even the same poet is elusive: read the hymns of Callimachus and then his epigrams; the reconciliation of these two diverse products of the same artist is a severe test of one's appreciation of Hellenistic poetry. No wonder that the histories of the period contain generalizations that even a superficial acquaintance with the literature overthrows. All these contradictory qualities are but the manifestation of the growing freedom of the individual, his emancipation from the simplicity and narrowness of life in one city-state into the varied experiences of a big new world. Each individual, each new experience, supplies the interpretation of the resultant poem. The homogeneity of life in the city-state tended to produce relative uniformity in artistic expression. The new age promotes infinite variety.

Yet from this infinite variety there emerge a few noteworthy qualities in content and form, of permanent significance.

The content of Hellenistic literature was seriously affected by the skepticism of the times. For centuries the higher types of poetry — epos and tragedy — had dealt with the old myths. The conservative tendencies of the people did not readily admit of relinquishing these staple themes; but the life, the spirit of these myths, was dead or moribund. It was no longer possible to reinterpret them; the poets who continue to use them hardly succeed in more than a reproduction of the main outlines, with changes in less important details and lavish decoration of the skeleton with rhetorical ornament. But the antiquarian interest of the day provided a substitute for the old myths. Local historians revealed a mine of legends; many of these were love-stories. To this new material poets and writers of the less serious prose types turned with eagerness.

Along with this use of sentimental legends comes a frank avowal of individual experience; the epigram, if not the elegy, often depicts the sweetness and bitterness of the poet's real or imagined passion. Under similar social conditions the song-poetry of Alcaeus and Sappho had anticipated this personal love-lyric; Euripides, again, had emphasized the less agreeable phases of the great passion in his tragedies. But in general the theme was excluded from the sublimer types of poetry in the classical period by the prevalent feeling that love was a mere disease, irreconcilable with Greek notions of soundness and sanity, and inappropriate in the higher forms of artistic expression. Calypso, Circe, Antigone, are no exceptions; love in Homer and Sophocles is a mere incident, and a cold incident, though the splendid chorus to invincible Eros in the *Antigone* and philosophical discussion of love betray the undercurrents that reach the surface in the Hellenistic period and have ever since swept through literature with tidal force.

This new theme,[1] however, does not entirely free itself from the limitations imposed by Greek notions. Love is a disease even in the Hellenistic period. The technique of the love-story in prose or in verse is surprisingly simple. Any psychological study is beyond the ken of the interpreter; as a disease it appeals to him from a pathological standpoint. The period of inoculation is short; a moment is enough. The only efficient cause is that hero and heroine are good-looking; as an external agent Eros plays a part with his fatal arrow. Once the two have succumbed, the fever waxes with astonishing rapidity; the interpreter delights to record the symptoms, almost exclu-

[1] Rohde, *Der griechische Roman*, second edition, Leipzig, 1900; Schwartz, *Fünf Vorträge über den griechischen Roman*, Berlin, 1896; essays on the romantic vein in classical literature are contained in *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius* by Butcher (London, 1904), pp. 245 ff., and in *Lectures on Classical Subjects* by Hardie (London, 1903), pp. 132 ff.

sively physical — the tremor, the ringing in the ears, loss of speech, pallor, sleeplessness — a harrowing record of love's bittersweetness, oftener with tragic than happy issue. Necessarily emotion is unrestrained, and the earlier convention of self-control breaks down in the realistic love-story of these later days.

The form of Hellenistic literature is marked by a conscious effort to achieve style. Even the prose that deals primarily with fact rather than fancy often strives for the phrase. Every language has in its colloquial forms means of enforcing the thought, of pleasing the ear; Greek was not wanting in such aids to forceful and elegant expression. But the systematic study and conscious use of rhetorical devices became prominent only toward the end of the fifth century. Rhetoric speedily became an important element in education. Philosophy, once hostile, was eventually reconciled to it. In the classical period, however, the movement was in the main controlled by a sense of proportion and good taste. Antithesis and assonance were judiciously employed. The ornament was not obtrusive. The style remained direct and simple. But the effect of intensive study soon became apparent. In the Hellenistic period it is no doubt true that sound often takes precedence of sense, that novelty of manner is more essential than novelty of matter. Still this very straining for novelty resulted in an important achievement: the Hellenistic Greeks broke up the long flowing sentences of earlier prose into short abrupt clauses — a style that Seneca and Tacitus cultivated in Latin; these short, crisp sentences more easily became the vehicle of pointed epigrams; antithesis and assonance enforced the point; rhythmical structure and poetic diction enhanced the effect. This decorative style was not always exaggerated in our period. The strong scientific interest of the day held the movement to some extent in check by encouraging a

rather crude form of expression. But later there developed a florid euphuistic style so sharply in contrast with the directness and simplicity of the earliest standards that reaction was inevitable; and it is to the unpopularity in later days of this ornamental style that the fragmentary nature of our remains of Hellenistic literature is largely due. The influence of Hellenistic style on Latin literature, however, was potent, and through that medium it became a significant factor in the development of form.

The injurious effect of striving for the phrase was promoted by the practice of declamation. As school exercises and public performances these formal speeches on subjects far removed from the normal experiences of daily life by their artificiality of form and content seriously interfered with naturalness and spontaneity. The declamation became a feeble substitute for the oration of the classical period. Oratory could no longer maintain the prestige it enjoyed under Demosthenes in the city-state. The loss of independence stifled the eloquence that once stirred the people in the Athenian assemblies. The courts furnished the chief natural occasion for public speaking, and the speech in court was limited to the case in hand.

In general the prose types are of slight significance to the student of literature. The scanty remains of Hellenistic prose in any artistic form make it difficult to reconstruct the characteristic features, although there are sometimes clear reflections in later Greek and in Latin literature. The scientific prose can hardly be called literature. Much that needs to be said in an account of the culture of the Hellenistic period would be out of place in a description of the prose as a form of art. Posidonius, for example, exerted a considerable influence upon the content of Latin prose and poetry, but the fragments of his Greek works are so meagre that he is more fitly treated in an account of Latin literature, or of Hellenistic culture, than here.

Important as the doctrines of various philosophical schools are in the history of thought Hellenistic philosophy produced no significant masterpieces remotely comparable to the dialogues of Plato. Many of the philosophers renounced literary composition altogether; others composed dry technical treatises without literary finish. But an important contribution was made to the development of literary form in the use of new or remodelled types of prose composition. The philosophical dialogue and the symposium were cultivated; the epistle — didactic, hortatory, consoling — was so common as to be the subject of parody, and the Christian epistle owes much to its Hellenistic prototype. The masses were reached with great effectiveness by a presentation in vivid, dramatic prose adorned with figures, similes, quotations, anecdotes, epigram, antithesis, and couched in short, conversational sentences, of themes immediately affecting the conduct of life, virtues and vices of all sorts; this new form, known as the diatribe, an anticipation of the sermon, was influential in unexpected ways; for its spirit and tone as well as its rhetorical form became so general as to permeate unrelated literary types, even of poetry. The Roman satirists often echo this Hellenistic preachment to the masses.

The conquests of Alexander and his successors naturally led to essays in history; antiquarian activity and scientific interest found expression in manifold prose treatises, but few of them belong in the field of belles-lettres. Such prose was written by practical persons for practical purposes. The best example of it is contained in the history of Polybius, who, however much he renounced the graces of literary style, stands forth as a significant personality, a sane observer of phenomena, a judicious appraiser of causes and effects, vivid in his description of events, keen in analysis of character.

To us to-day a by-product of historical prose is of special interest. History and myth in the Greek mind were not

so carefully distinguished as they are at present. Fact and fancy were not irreconcilable. Even the *Iliad* might pass as a historical document. So it comes about that fictitious prose narrative, which bulks so large in modern literature, appears even before the Hellenistic period in the guise of history. Early studies of alien peoples and unknown lands often included legends, piquant love stories, tales of the marvellous, picked up from more or less trustworthy informants. Such fiction forms a considerable part of the history of Herodotus. As Greek civilization developed, the increase of travel and acquaintance with barbaric peoples sharpened the contrast between the rude simplicity of uncivilized folk and the complex, often vicious, development of the Greek world; in time, idealists began to illustrate their conceptions of the highest forms of social and political organization by reference to the naturalism of barbaric nations. Philosophers constructed Utopias peopled with fanciful beings living under ideal social conditions. Into such Utopian fiction were interwoven many features, many tales, derived from historians and travelers who blended fancy with fact. Naturally the Eastern world supplied much of the material; there is a distinct Oriental coloring.

In brief, one may detect, before our period and to a greater extent during it, the beginnings of various forms of fictitious prose narrative of love and adventure. Short stories, mainly love-tales, not only adorned the pages of sober history, but were collected separately; these were sometimes, perhaps generally, grouped with reference to the region whence they came; an example is the famous *Milesian Tales*, the date and precise nature of which are uncertain; antiquarian interests in our period must have added considerably to such collections, and the material was often made over into verse. Utopian fiction as the expression of the philosopher's idealism is as early as Plato; in the Hellenistic period Hecataeus and Euhemerus used the form to

express their rationalistic interpretation of religion; the latter imagined that he visited three islands on the way from the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean; in the island of Panchaea he found traces of those happy days when the gods were but powerful men on earth; the people are ideal folk living in a small Paradise. This work was translated into Latin by Ennius. There can be little doubt that tales of travel and adventure without any didactic purpose were also current.

This fictitious narrative appears in still another form. Closely associated as it was with historical interest and historical narrative, it naturally found its way into Hellenistic history, and in no other case more significantly than into the accounts of Alexander's conquests. A fanciful narrative of his exploits, in the form of letters, forms the Hellenistic nucleus of what later became by constant accretions, the Alexander-romance. The existence of historical romance [1] in our period, therefore, has long been suspected. This suspicion was recently confirmed by the discovery of a papyrus fragment of some length which gives the torso of a story of love and adventure with two famous historical characters as hero and heroine, Ninus and Semiramis. The story plays freely with historical facts; little remains of actual history save the main characters. Such material points the way to that interesting body of later fiction which we know as the Greek Romances, extending from the first century after Christ to the Renaissance. In general, the outlines of all this fictitious fanciful prose in the Hellenistic period are tantalizingly vague; the modern reader must turn to the Roman novels of Petronius and Apuleius and to the Greek Romances, and seek in the story of the matron of Ephesus, in the adventures of the robbers in Apuleius, in the story of Cupid and Psyche, in the incoherent narrative

[1] Wilamowitz, *Greek Historical Writing* (translated by Gilbert Murray). Oxford, 1908.

of harrowing escapades of hero and heroine in the Romances, the developed form of many types of fiction that make the Hellenistic period significant to a reader of the modern novel. It is worth noting that the general trend of such fiction is away from realism; it is a fanciful ideal world into which most of this narrative carries us.

In turning to the poetry, we reach more certain ground. The material is greater in amount and more immediately appealing to the modern student.

The epic is represented by a single complete poem, the *Tale of the Argonauts* by Apollonius of Rhodes. Tradition says it is the issue of an academic quarrel in which Apollonius contended there was still room for the long, unorganized Homeric epic. His poem, therefore, is reminiscent of Homer in language and structure. Like Odysseus, the hero Jason roams over the world and survives many hazardous adventures in his effort to obtain the golden fleece. Severe tasks are imposed upon him which he accomplishes with the aid of Medea; she has fallen in love with him at first sight, and by her magic power preserves him from harm; as a reward the hero steals her from her home and parents and makes her his bride. The poem is full of Homeric tags, Homeric diction, similes in Homeric style, though often original in content; the structure is very loosely episodic, and lacks unity. But the poet reveals considerable descriptive power, both in accounts of perilous adventure and especially in the portrayal of feeling. Much less successful is his handling of rapid narrative; the character treatment is weak and ineffectual, except in the case of the hero and heroine and one or two incidental persons. The poet's imagination strains after, rather than reaches by any natural exercise, its very modest attainment. Yet, in spite of some defects, the third book at least, and individual passages in other parts of the poem, show no little power. However simple and superficial the technique of it may be,

and however true it is that the reader of Vergil's story of Dido finds in it only occasion for odious comparison, the love-story of Jason and Medea is of permanent value as the earliest complete example in extant Greek literature of a romance in narrative form, essentially of the modern type. Such qualities as it possesses may be illustrated in the poet's description of the first interview between Jason and Medea. Medea is already in love; she comes to bring him the magic charm; awaiting his approach, she has bidden her handmaidens sing and dance and gather flowers: —

But Medea, her thoughts unto nought else turned, upon nought could be stayed,
Howsoever she sang — but never a song, howso'er she essayed,
Pleased her, that long its melody winged her feet for the dance;
But ever she faltered amidst them, her eyes ever wandered askance
Away from the throng of her maidens unresting; and over the ways,
Turning aside her cheeks, far off ever strained she her gaze.
O the heart in her breast oft fainted, whenever in fancy she heard
Fleet past her the sound of a footfall, the breath of a breeze as it stirred.
But it was not long ere the hero appeared to her yearning eyes
Stately striding, as out of the ocean doth Sirius uprise,
Who climbeth the sky most glorious and clear to discern from afar,
But unto the flocks for measureless mischief a baleful star:
Even so came Aison's son to the maiden glorious to see, —
But with Jason's appearing dawned troublous misery.
Then it seemed as her heart dropped out of her bosom; a dark mist came
Over her eyes, and hot in her cheeks did the blushes flame.
Nor backward nor forward a step could she stir: all strength was gone
From her knees; and her feet to the earth seemed rooted; and one after one
Her handmaidens all drew back, and with him was she left alone.
So these twain stood — all stirless and wordless stood face to face:
As oaks they seemed, or as pines upsoaring in stately grace,
Which side by side all still mid the mountains rooted stand
When winds are hushed; but by breath of the breeze when at last they are fanned,

Stir they with multitudinous murmur and sigh — so they
By love's breath stirred were to pour out all in their hearts that lay.

This distress Jason comforts, asks for the magic herbs, and praises her beauty; the poet continues: —

Extolling her so spake he; and her eyelids drooped, while played
A nectar smile on her lips; and melted the heart of the maid
By his praising uplifted; her eyes are a moment upraised to his eyes
And all speech faileth; no word at the first to her lips may rise;
But in one breath yearned she to speak forth all her joy and pain.
And with hand ungrudging forth from her odorous zone hath she ta'en
The charm, and he straightway received it into his hands full fain.
Yea, now would she even have drawn forth all her soul from her breast
And had laid it with joy in his hands for her gift, had he made request.
So wondrously now from the golden head of Aison's son
Did Love outlighten the witchery-flame; and her sweet eyes shone
With the gleam that he stole therefrom, and her heart glowed through and through
Melting for rapture away, from the lips of the rose as the dew
At the sun's kiss melteth away, when the day-spring is kindled anew.[1]

This passage not only illustrates the poet's imagery and his power of suggesting emotional distress, but it introduces one immediately to the new atmosphere of Hellenistic poetry. Such unregulated emotion may seem un-Greek, but new social conditions have made the portrayal of such feeling legitimate even in the higher types of poetry.

Apollonius's poem was one issue of the dispute over the propriety in these later days of the Homeric epic. The chief opponent was Callimachus, who representing a reactionary movement, a new modern spirit wearied by the length of the old epic and its tedious iteration of old themes,

[1] *The Tale of the Argonauts*, translated by A. S. Way, London, 1901. (Book III, 947–971, 1007–1020).

declared that the new world must read its narrative poetry in one sitting, or we should better say, hear it recited at one sitting. To meet this demand the epyllium, or short epic, was cultivated, marked by exquisite finish and a corresponding defect of vigor and spontaneity; in its best form it has the grace and nicety of the miniature in contrast with the broad fresco of the old epic, but in unskilful hands, it is marred by copious detail, pedantry, and insincere feeling — weaknesses, however, that are not peculiar to the epyllium. One may easily appreciate the charm and the tediousness of this new creation by reading such Latin adaptations as we have in Catullus's *Peleus and Thetis*, and in the *Ciris* attributed to Vergil. The possibilities were best realized in the fourth book of the *Aeneid*, but it is doubtful if any Hellenistic poet matched Vergil's achievement. Callimachus himself illustrated his conception of the epic in the *Hecale*, in which was described the entertainment of Theseus, before his encounter with the Marathonian bull, by Hecale, a poor old woman. The poet dwelt upon the details of the humble surroundings and of the modest entertainment which the kindly old woman offered the hero, to her a stranger. The details were realistic, the setting idyllic; the atmosphere of simple human kindliness and divine appreciation is reproduced in Ovid's story of Philemon and Baucis.

In epic poetry, and in some other types, there were often intruded information and allusion and discussion, and even diction, that betray academic interest. Pedantry has long been regarded as a characteristic blemish in Hellenistic poetry. Much of it may be explained as appealing to newly awakened intellectual interests on the part of the reader or hearer; some of it is doubtless a selfish intrusion of the artist's scholarly interest. But the extent of it is somewhat less than most readers imagine. Not a few types — comedy, the mime, epigram, for example — are quite free from such inartistic features. In the less realistic, less personal poetry,

pedantry has a freer range. It is a natural issue of the scholarly, scientific tendency of the day. This tendency found unimpeded expression in didactic poetry in which the driest themes were set forth, in various metres, but most frequently in hexameter verse. Of these didactic poems several are important to the reader of Latin poetry; Aratus's *Phaenomena*, an astronomical poem, was translated by several Romans, the *Georgics* and *Metamorphoses* of Nicander are part of the background of Vergil's and Ovid's poems of the same names, but the Latin poets in both cases far surpassed their Hellenistic model.

To the modern reader "elegy" and "epigram" describe two very distinct literary types. The Greek forms, however, to which we loosely apply these names are misrepresented if the connotation attached to "elegy" and "epigram" is transferred to the ancient types. From a Greek standpoint an elegy is a relatively long poem written in elegiac couplets; an epigram is a relatively short poem, usually in elegiac couplets; the subject-matter of both types is varied: "elegy" in the sense of a lament for the dead describes only a small portion of Greek elegy; "epigram" in the sense of a short satirical poem is too limited in meaning to suggest the wide range covered by Greek epigram. Elegy and epigram, in subject-matter, vary at different periods of Greek literature, and in one and the same period each type is often elastic; but both are alike in external form, in metre, save for a few epigrams in other than elegiac verse.

There can be little doubt that the themes treated in Hellenistic elegy were more varied than our extant material suggests. In earlier days the elegy had served to express sorrow for the loss of friends and kin, patriotic admonition, personal advice; possibly its scope had been widened to include various convivial themes in which wine and woman were the central interest. It is unlikely

that such flexibility was restricted in the Hellenistic period. But the extant fragments of Hellenistic elegy reveal a dominant interest in mythological narrative; the narrative was often inspired by the poet's personal experience; only incidentally, however, does he reveal it. This mythological narrative is usually sentimental, and in technique illustrates the conventional features of the Hellenistic love-story. The mythological basis, however, often tempted the poet into learned digression. In many cases, therefore, the poems were a curious mixture of tender sentiment verging on sentimentality and pedantic argument. In this respect elegy and epyllium had much in common.

The poet's personal experience, real or fancied, finds no expression in extant elegy. The shorter elegiac poems, however, known as epigrams, are very commonly a confession of personal feeling. They, rather than the elegy, seem in many instances to prepare the way for the love-poems of Ovid, Tibullus, and Propertius, for Roman elegy, in so far as it is concerned with the poet's own sentimental experience. This, however, is only one of many topics treated in the epigram. The wide range of subject-matter, the great variety of authors represented in our collections, make this type the most valuable document that we possess for the discovery of essential characteristics of Hellenistic poetry.

In the preceding centuries the epigram in the main had served practical purposes. The tombstone and the votive offering to the god had chiseled upon them a few elegiac couplets, in the one case mentioning the name of the dead, the family to which he belonged, his residence, and a brief characterization; in the other case the name of the giver, of the divinity approached, and a suggestion of the occasion of the offering. In the time of the Persian Wars the patriotism of Greek warriors was celebrated on the public monuments erected in their honor, and in

this connection professional poets were called in to compose the epitaphs. The private inscriptions were often the work of unskilful hands, but the classical period had nothing finer than the public inscriptions attributed to Simonides. Beside this inscribed epigram in the classical period there are traces of what for convenience we may call the literary epigram, to be recited, or read from manuscript; these traces are vague and dubious, but even before the Hellenistic period the Greeks used the short elegiac poem for literary as well as practical purposes. We may even grant the very plausible theory that on convivial occasions brief recitations in elegiac couplets formed part of the entertainment; in that case there would be every reason why a great variety of themes should be treated in short elegiac poems. In this great variety one would not be surprised to find poems that were distinctly satirical, and in any case without any satirical intent on the writer's part the few couplets, often no more than three, which the poet had at his service, would tempt to the making of a point, and easily a barbed point. From this kind of epigram, which was not very common until just before the time of the Roman poet Martial, the modern term epigram gets its specific connotation.

However far the classical Greeks may have gone in using the epigram consciously as a literary type, and however much the restriction to epitaph and votive offering may have yielded as early as the sixth century to a more elastic usage of this metrical form, we shall not be far wrong in saying that the literary epigram treating of almost any conceivable theme is essentially a Hellenistic creation. It now becomes the favorite mode of expressing any occasional emotion, of celebrating any occasional event. The inscribed epigram may still have been cultivated, and the literary epigram suggested by the death of a friend or the occasion of an offering to the gods is common. Indeed,

the distinctive characteristics of the literary epigram are those features that survive from the inscribed epigram. The limits of space on the monument necessitated conciseness and suggestiveness; the thought must be complete when one reaches the end, and yet the very brevity of the form makes the poem a failure unless there are implications, illuminating suggestions that enrich the content without breaking the mold. It must not be "blurred by afterthought," but the result is barren if the poet does not mean somewhat more than he says. And the "fine tact" appears in stopping short, and far short of the enigma as well as in going beyond the obvious.[1]

The rich variety of content, and even of form apart from the metre, makes the large number of epigrams far from monotonous reading. We can discern the budding forth of the inscription into the imaginative poem. An original inscription would have read: "Here lies Timonoe, daughter of Timotheus, of Methymna; her husband Euthymenes mourns her loss." But the Hellenistic poet presents it all in a different form; he stops and reads the name, then comments: "'Timonoe?' Who are you?" Reading further, he exclaims: "Why, I had not known you but for your father Timotheus's name upon the stone and Methymna your native town. Yes, I grant you, your husband Euthymenes does mourn your loss." Here all the formulas of the inscription are retained, but a dramatic situation and added pathos enrich the content. This conversational form may lead far beyond any inscribed

[1] Translations of Hellenistic epigrams may be found in Mackail, *Select Epigrams from the Greek Anthology*, second edition, London, 1906, accompanied by a stimulating introductory essay; translations by various hands into verse in Tomson, *Selections from the Greek Anthology*, London, 1889; by Lilla Cabot Perry, *From the Garden of Hellas*, New York, 1891. Many love-poems of the fifth book of the Palatine Anthology are translated by Paton, *Anthologiae Graecae Erotica*, London, 1898. All these collections include epigrams of the later periods.

epigram that we can imagine. In the following epigram it expresses with delicate irony the prevailing skepticism toward the myths of the other world; the poet stops before the tombstone, and speaks first to it, then to the dead beneath it: "'Does Charidas really rest beneath you?' 'If you mean the son of Arimmas, of Cyrene, yes, he does.' 'Oh Charidas, how are things down below?' 'It's dark, very dark.' 'And how about getting back to earth?' 'That's a lie.' 'And how about Pluto?' 'Fiction.' 'There's no hope!' 'Well what I have told you is the truth, but if you prefer the pretty fancy — beef is cheap in Hades.'" The poet may abandon all thought of tombstone and grave; the poem then becomes simply a plaintive commemoration of the death of a friend; in this case of a brother-poet whose immortal melodies, called nightingales, are contrasted with his own mortality: —

> They told me, Heraclitus, thou wert dead,
> And then I thought (and tears thereon did shed),
> How oft we two talked down the sun; but thou,
> Halicarnassian friend, art ashes now.
> Yet live thy nightingales of song; on those
> Forgetfulness shall ne'er her hand impose.[1]

Such a contrast may be trite; often the characterization is subtler. In another epigram, perhaps intended for the stone, there seems to be an extraordinary fullness of suggestion; the poem is interesting, too, as are many of these poems, in bringing before us a curious type in Hellenistic life, the man who read character from the face: "The tomb of Eusthenes: reader of character, and clever in seeing the mind through the eye; his mates gave him burial, generously, though he was a stranger in a strange land; and the poet was his loyal friend. All whereof has need, he has in death, a clever artist; though poor and weak he has, after all, mourners at

[1] Translation by H. N. Coleridge.

his grave." The almost satirical implication that the reader of character employed his art to choose friends who would pay his funeral expenses could hardly be more neatly suggested.

Hardly any phase of Hellenistic life and thought fails to be expressed in the epigram. Needless to say, love in all its moods finds a prominent place, and here with striking anticipations of Elizabethan manner and conceit. The compass of three couplets is soon slightly exceeded, the distinctive features of the inscribed epigram become less inevitable, and we find ourselves in the midst of what we should call lyric poetry. In varying degrees, in different hands, and at different stages in our period, other types exert their influence; dramatic form, the diction of tragedy and song-poetry, rhetorical ornament, all contribute to the evolution of the epigram. The culmination of this development may be illustrated by this poem of Meleager at the end of our epoch; the rich Oriental fancy, the rhetorical coloring are individual traits, but the poem may suggest the possibilities of the type. The English version, however, is a very free expansion of the thought of the Greek original.

Now the bright crocus flames, and now
The slim narcissus takes the rain,
And, straying o'er the mountain's brow,
The daffodillies bud again.
The thousand blossoms wax and wane
On wold, and heath, and fragrant bough,
But fairer than the flowers art thou,
Than any growth of hill or plain.

Ye gardens, cast your leafy crown,
That my Love's feet may tread it down,
Like lilies on the lilies set;
My Love, whose lips are softer far
Than drowsy poppy petals are,
And sweeter than the violet.[1]

[1] Translation by Andrew Lang.

We have seen that the satirical epigram with a carefully devised point deferred to the very end of the poem is only one phase of development, and a phase assiduously cultivated only by a few authors near the beginning of the Christian era. By them possibly Martial was influenced, and through Martial the modern use of the term epigram became limited to its present connotation. But in its wider Greek sense the Hellenistic epigram exerted an influence on Latin poetry much earlier; the shorter poems of Catullus, some odes of Horace, are epigrams; even the love-elegies of Ovid, Tibullus, and Propertius are by some believed to be mere expansions of epigrams, but this theory can hardly be applied to all elegies, however convincing it may seem in a few cases.

Not a few epigrams depict types from real life, like the reader of character whom we met in an epigram ascribed to Theocritus. In some cases these types seem to come, not directly from life, but from Hellenistic comedies. The comedy is primarily a product of Athens, unlike the other literature of the period, and is significant of the change that came over this particular city-state, which, however, in general yielded much less readily than other parts of the Hellenistic world to modern influences. The comedy of the classical period, of Aristophanes, is as innocent of structural unity as the Homeric Epic. Its subject-matter is largely of local interest, and becomes unintelligible to the modern reader because of constant criticism of contemporary art and politics, and the abuse of individuals in the audience who are insignificant to us; in general, its value is dependent upon the full knowledge of the life and thought of the city-state of Athens. Only incidentally does it contain what is of universal application and interest. The New Comedy of Hellenistic Athens concentrates our attention upon the average citizen, upon characters and situations that are common to the world at large; its content is drawn from the private life of the period; it is realistic, no longer fan-

tastic; its form is coherent and forecasts more plainly than Euripidean tragedy the modern five-act play. The plots are undoubtedly monotonous; the identification of lost children — a theme derived from Euripidean tragedy, the intriguing of slaves against their masters, recur with tedious regularity; the characters are repeated from play to play — the sentimental son, the stern father, the faithless slave-dealer, the braggart soldier, the courtezan, now mercenary, now faithful and considerate; but the delineation of character in Menander's hands must have been varied and delicate. The ethical standards are low, the social conditions unpleasing; but much of the repulsive side of the New Comedy is not, at least to the extent in which it appears in the plays, a faithful reproduction of contemporary Greek life; the nature of the plots, the conventions of the stage, account for the low moral standards, for the prominence of the demi-monde: the plot of intrigue inevitably brings with it cunning and rascality; the woman of respectability in actual life was confined to the house; the stage-setting, therefore, which excludes interior scenes by regularly representing the city-street as the foreground of the action, more easily admits as heroine the only woman in contemporary society who has free access to the street.[1] It is, however, unquestionably true that we should readily sacrifice all the newly discovered fragments of Menander, all the twenty-six plays of Plautus and Terence in Latin, which are but adaptations of Hellenistic comedies, rather than lose the *Birds* or the *Frogs* of Aristophanes. The significance of this type is not in its distinction, in any high literary value, but in the simple fact that in so far as there is any classical element in Molière and his kind, Molière is ultimately Menander and not Aristophanes, that Hellenistic comedy is the initial stage in extant classical

[1] For an account of social conditions at Athens in the Hellenistic period, cf. W. S. Ferguson, *Hellenistic Athens* (London, 1911), pp. 65 ff.

literature of the development that leads to the modern comedy of manners and especially of intrigue. Perhaps it would be too much to maintain that this comedy is a creation of the age in which it first appears so prominently, although there seems to be current a notion that Menandrian comedy was evolved from Aristophanic comedy by omitting the choral element and eliminating personal criticism. Such an evolution is difficult to imagine; the comedy of manners flourished at least in Sicily even before the time of Aristophanes; at Athens in the fifth century it was to a considerable extent submerged by the local fantastic comedy; in the Hellenistic period new conditions call it forth into new life; it did not emerge without being modified, and no doubt improved, and somewhat under the influence of Euripidean tragedy; but it is a regeneration, rather than a new creation.[1]

Closely related to comedy is the type of poetry known to the ancients as the mime; it betrays in its name its chief purpose — direct imitation. Back of the literary form which it assumes in our period are cruder phases that before and during the Hellenistic period served to entertain the people, very much as the music-hall song and the monologue of the vaudeville show to-day; as recitation or song accompanied by dramatic action these less artistic forms satisfied a demand for mere amusement. Out of these developed a recitation, probably by the poet himself, in which, at least in the hands of Theocritus, perhaps under the influence of epic — also intended for recitation — the verse was regularly the hexameter; somewhat nearer the dramatic form are the mimes of Herondas in the iambic verse once cultivated by the early poet Hipponax. Like the comedy, only in much shorter

[1] The content and the form of the New Comedy have been fully treated by Legrand, *Daos: Tableau de la comédie grecque pendant la période dite nouvelle*, Lyon et Paris, 1910.

The new fragments of Menander are translated by Unus Multorum, Oxford and London, 1909.

compass, the mime reproduced scenes from private life. Like the comedy, too, it lent itself readily to the portrayal of character types.

The work of Herondas, fully known to us only since the year 1891, reveals an accurate observation and a clearness of portrayal that his more famous contemporary Theocritus cannot equal. But the clearness is that of photography; there is no sense of proportion, of discrimination; the characters are drawn with a heavy hand, with extravagance, with repellent realism. Yet there is hardly anything else in Greek literature which so easily convinces the reader that the Greeks, however extraordinary, were thoroughly human. The Penelope of the first mime, withstanding the insinuating suggestions of her caller who would weaken her loyalty to her absent husband; the unsympathetic mother, incorrigible schoolboy, and relentless pedagogue of the third mime; the ladies in the temple of Aesculapius admiring with all the "bromides" of the untutored art-critic the statuary before them; the shoemaker exploiting his wares and browbeating his customers — how modern his obsequious courtesy as he exclaims "I cannot have you leave the shop, ladies, until you are thoroughly satisfied!" — these are the average citizen in all his commonplaceness. They serve as a not unpleasant antithesis to the carefully fostered notions of Greek sanemindedness.[1]

In Theocritus one finds once more, and with peculiar pleasure — for the relief furnished by Herondas is only a temporary satisfaction — the recurrence of the old Greek refinement and taste. Born probably in Sicily in the midst of a peasantry who possessed, in spite of their humble occupations, an unusual degree of poetic imagination, and an unusual appreciation of the beauties of external nature, the poet's own endowments found a natural outlet in depicting

[1] The mimes have been translated into verse by Sharpley, *A Realist of the Aegean*, London, 1906.

this peasantry with all simplicity and charm, their pastoral life, their romantic adventures, their store of legends. With absolute naturalness they come before us: the keen-witted Battus, the bumpkin Corydon, at the foot of the hill tending their sheep and goats, Battus bantering Corydon the while with vacant gawping seriousness; their interest in their flocks, in their sweethearts, interrupted by an occasional recalcitrant goat or a thorn that pricks Battus's foot — "How tiny a thorn, and yet how big a man it overcomes," says Battus in the humorous moralizing tone of his class, and Corydon is stupidly unconscious of the humor; the flocks have reached the hilltop, Battus and Corydon have crossed it and passed out of our ken. A charming picture, all true, but sweet and wholesome; to-morrow, we think, we shall seek them out again on the same hillside and hear their new experiences, their new pastoral songs. There is no sense of art, of poetry, only a refreshing glimpse of simple folk, deep draughts of fresh air, warmed by the Sicilian sun, with a background of bright flowers, the cool shade of trees, and murmuring streams.

Naïve, the casual reader says, and he is excusable; in fact, the art is there, and quite conscious art. Presently the art comes perilously near to artificiality. In another poem realism becomes a mere framework in which to set legendary material; in still another the same framework sets off, not real herdsmen, but poets masquerading as herdsmen. So in these pastoral mimes of Theocritus we have in microscopic form the development of what we call the pastoral, from apparent artlessness to obtrusive artificiality. Once the poet Theocritus has introduced himself and his poet-friends disguised as herdsmen into the seventh poem, it is easier for Vergil to bring into his *Eclogues* literary men and patrons of literature; once the future emperor, Augustus, has been celebrated in Vergil's pastoral verse, the poets of the early empire under new social and political conditions

easily make of the pastoral a court poem; the court of Charles the Great resurrects, or should we say, exhumes it. The intrusion of alien elements once established, the pastoral becomes a mere mold in which to cast moral and political satire, with courtiers, or priests, or bishops as the masqueraders. From artistic realism to the hollowest artificiality, from Theocritus through Vergil and Calpurnius and Charles's courtiers to Petrarch and the Mantuan and Marot and Spenser, the pastoral passes — a singular instance of the almost unbroken continuity of a type created in the Hellenistic period.

To the Greek, the pastoral was merely the mime of country life. Theocritus may have contributed much to its artistic form, especially in the choice of metrical form, but the mime in prose had already been cultivated by his fellow-countryman, Sophron, in the fifth century, and to him Theocritus certainly owed something. Yet there is an individuality in the art of the poet that inclines us to grant him a high degree of creative power. This art appears most happily in his handling of legendary material. The legend of Daphnis had been a simple Sicilian folk-tale; the folk-tale told of Daphnis's love-affair with a nymph who made him promise under heavy penalty that he would never indulge love for a mortal woman; Daphnis broke his vow and was blinded. In Theocritus the tale is modified, probably under the influence of contemporary romantic fiction: Daphnis, ideal herdsman, has sworn never to yield to love of woman; this oath has excited the wrath of Aphrodite, who stimulates in him love for a maiden, a love apparently requited, for the maiden seeks him through bush and brier; but Daphnis, true to his vow, avoids her and chooses to pine away with his love unsatisfied. We are in no position to know whether the poet is to be credited with this modification, but his art appears in the handling of the theme. The theme itself is presented in a song by one of two herdsmen in response to

the urgent entreaty of his fellow; in this preliminary conversation the poet reveals the setting with his usual luxury of picturesque detail; the song itself is a succession of stanzas with changing refrain, the style now lyrical, now dramatic. But the poet's skill is chiefly shown in choosing with truly Sophoclean art the final chapter of the story, the death-scene, as the centre of the action; all nature is mourning the loss of its favorite; the rustic divinities come to sympathize, to comfort; even Aphrodite herself comes to exult, but remains to pity, and to regret her vengeful spirit. Through conversation between the herdsman and the divinities, the poet beautifully suggests the situation, gradually unfolding the suffering and its cause, slowly stimulating our curiosity, awakening our sympathy, never gratifying us with explicit information, but leading us on to the truth with delicate hints and using dialogue and description to enrich our knowledge of the hero's interests, his occupation, his stubborn will, his intimacy with Pan, and the pathos of his case; and in the background are the creatures of wood and field with despairing cries mourning the loss of him.

Such a singularly graceful bit of imaginative art could hardly be without effect upon later poets. So, some generations later, we find the poet Bion retaining the background of sympathetic nature, keeping much of the rich pathos of the situation, of the graceful ornament of external form, but putting in the foreground new characters — Aphrodite herself and her lover, the handsome Adonis, slain by the wild boar in his reckless enjoyment of the chase. But the situation is less simple; the reader cannot fully appreciate the new poem without knowing more than the poem reveals; yet it is interesting to see how much nearer to our modern taste the copiousness of detail, the luxury of emotional suggestion, bring this poem of the latter end of the Hellenistic period. In the East was celebrated a festival in honor of Adonis; he and his divine mistress Aphrodite were represented in

effigy laid out upon richly ornamented couches beneath an arbor about which were disposed figures of the little Cupids. Associated more or less with the ceremony was the legend itself of the goddess's grief over the loss of her lover. The poet again constructs his poem in stanzas with recurrent refrain, but there is no framework of pastoral realism, only bits of pastoral suggestion; the poem is no longer a pastoral at all, but from a modern standpoint lyrical. Yet to call it lyrical quite misrepresents it: the poet in his stanzas brings one picture after another before us without ever intruding himself; one moment we are by the side of Adonis in the open, the next moment we are recalled to the effigies beneath the green canopy at the festival; the refrain sets off the different pictures, marks the changes of mood; the form is that of song, but the poem is not a song.[1] A stanza or two from Mrs. Browning's very uneven translation only faintly suggests this singularly modern poem:

Woe, Woe! Cytherea! Adonis is dead.
She wept tear after tear with the blood that was shed;
And both turned into flowers for the earth's garden-close;
Her tears to the windflower, his blood to the rose.
I mourn for Adonis — Adonis is dead,
Weep no more in the woods, Cytherea, thy lover!
So, well; make a place for his corse in thy bed,
With the purples thou sleepest in, under and over,
He's fair though a corse — a fair corse, like a sleeper —
Lay him soft in the silks he had pleasure to fold,
When, beside thee at night, holy dreams deep and deeper
Inclosed his young life on the couch made of gold!
Love him still, poor Adonis! cast on him together
The crowns and the flowers! Since he died from the place,
Why let all die with him — let the blossoms go wither;
Rain myrtles and olive-buds down on his face:
Rain the myrrh down, let all that is best fall a-pining,
For the myrrh of his life from thy keeping is swept!

[1] The best appreciation of Bion's poem is contained in the introduction of Wilamowitz, *Bion von Smyrna: Adonis*, Berlin, 1900.

The author of this poem was himself celebrated by a devoted follower in a third version of the theme; in this poem, in which all the virtues of the work of Theocritus and Bion are carried to ridiculous excess and become vices, there is little to commend. But there was something fitting in commemorating the poet Bion in a threnody modelled after the song of Daphnis, the pastoral singer. Modern imitations have usually adhered to this much of the setting; Milton in his *Lycidas* mourns the death of his poet-friend King, Shelley in his *Adonais* the death of Keats, and Arnold in his *Thyrsis* the death of Clough. There is no more significant comparison than that between the passage of Bion's poem in which the Cupids in turn bring their offerings, render their final service to Adonis, and the ninth and following sections of Shelley's *Adonais*, in which "the quick dreams, the winged ministers of thought" flit about their loved poet. The picture in Bion is thoroughly Hellenistic, is modern; yet the modern poet elaborates with a wealth of imagination and feeling that is quite beyond the reach of Bion; and Shelley with extraordinary power culls all the best from Theocritus, Bion, and Bion's unknown admirer, and weaves it all into a new masterpiece.

Theocritus did not confine himself to pastoral mimes. The life of the city with all its tragedy and bustling activity made its appeal. The jealous lover, the strenuous and the timid Syracusan ladies in Alexandria, he presents in different degrees of realism. His masterpiece, and perhaps the most characteristic product of the Hellenistic period, is the second mime,[1] in which alone of all his poems he reveals his power of expressing strong emotion. The theme itself is distinctly Hellenistic; to be sure the story of the abandoned sweetheart is perennial, but it may be doubted if it could easily have

[1] This poem is in some respects comparable to Victor Hugo's *Guitare*, which may be found in *A Book of Greek Verse* by Walter Headlam (Cambridge, 1907), p. 184.

won its way into poetry of the classical period. If we are reminded that Medea in Euripides's tragedy is the same sort of heroine, we may retort that Euripides is Hellenistic; or better still we may note that there is a significant difference between the heroine of the tragedy and the heroine of the mime, and in that difference lies the essential Hellenistic element: Theocritus feels no need to dignify his theme by elevating his heroine; she is no barbaric queen, but only an average woman. It is true that the type of literature chosen makes it easier to portray the middle or lowest class, but just therein we touch again the Hellenistic trait: our period creates and develops types of poetry that are free from the conventions of epic and tragedy, that find room for the average citizen, even for the commonplace, but not without making the new subject worthy of literary treatment. I have spoken in passing of cruder forms of the mime that correspond to our music-hall ballad and monologue. One of these the papyri have preserved for us, and in connection with the second mime of Theocritus it is interesting to note that "The Maid's Lament," as we call this music-hall song, is a solo sung by an abandoned sweetheart appealing to the night and the stars in her desperation as does Theocritus's heroine.

But again, as in the song of Daphnis, the art of this second mime of Theocritus is in the elaboration as much as in the choice of the situation. The mime is dramatic, as most of these poems are; the form is a monologue, though a servant is present during the earlier part of the action, and to her the heroine addresses a few commands. Again the final act of the tragedy is chosen as in the story of Daphnis. The scene, as the poet helps us visualize it, is out of doors, a night scene. In the dim light we discern the outlines of the cauldron, of the woman standing beside it; we hear her calling for the magic herbs to burn in the flame; it is a magic rite to win back the lover who has

betrayed and left her. She tells us just enough in her first words to pique our curiosity, to win our sympathy. Then begins her invocation of the moon, of Hecate, with all the grim details that increase the uncanniness of the situation. In stanzas with a weird refrain she drops in the cauldron one after another the herbs, melts the wax effigy of her lover, and whirls the magic wheel; here and there come details to inform us or to deepen the pathos: —

> Hushed are the voices of the winds and seas;
> But O not hushed the voice of my despair.
> He burns my being up, who left me here
> No wife, no maiden, in my misery.
> Turn, magic wheel, draw homeward him I love.

As yet her servant has stood waiting upon her; now the woman sends her to smear the lintel of the lover's door. Thus left alone she breaks forth into stanzas revealing in narrative monologue her whole tragic experience, each stanza set off by a new refrain: —

> Bethink thee, mistress Moon, whence came my love.

The narrative is strongly realistic and admirably in harmony with the character and situation. She remembers, as the psychologist tells us she should remember, every detail of the first meeting, even the dress she wore, the fever of love with all the physical symptoms, the despair, the summons to her lover, his fair speech, and the discovery of his faithlessness, all with rapidity in spite of the fullness of detail. The characterization is admirable; the lover's words immediately reveal the confident young athlete, and in their fulsomeness readily prepare us for the issue; the woman's changing moods in the changing stages of the narrative are true and convincing. The poet wisely leaves us in suspense as to the issue: his Roman imitator's taste was not so sure.

Theocritus wrote other poems than the mimes. He did not stay permanently in Sicily; he travelled to Cos, the birthplace of Herondas; there he knew other great poets of the period; he went further to Alexandria, seeking the court of the Ptolemies, as every literary man was likely to do sooner or later. His experience grew, his subjects and his art changed, not always for the better. He is not above tawdry flattery of crowned heads; he describes a boxing-match with the brutal realism of a sporting editor; but all in all the final impression is that left by the pastoral and city mimes, an impression of delicacy and grace and no little strength withal, little depth of feeling or rather little power to suggest strong emotion save in one poem, but a sweet wholesomeness and genial humor that have always redeemed the Hellenistic period from total neglect by lovers of good literature.[1]

Other types of poetry are less significant to the modern reader, or are difficult to reconstruct from the fragmentary remains. Hellenistic tragedy clung to the myths of the classical drama. There is little evidence of any attempt, as in comedy, to make contemporary social conditions the material of tragedy. Rhetoric, and vagaries in metre and music, probably served as ornament, and rather tawdry ornament, of the dry skeleton of myth. A development of form more closely approximating the five-act play may be guessed. Euripidean influence was doubtless predominant, but the precise effect of that influence can only be vaguely surmised. Even in the Latin tragedies of Seneca the Hellenistic elements cannot easily be discriminated.

Hellenistic literature is a natural outgrowth of social conditions; it is a significant literature, though not possessed

[1] Translations into prose of Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus may be found in Andrew Lang, *Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus*, second edition, London, 1889; of Theocritus into verse by Charles Stuart Calverley in his *Complete Works* (published by G. Bell and Sons, London, 1901).

of the high distinction of the best Hellenic product. The modern reader may properly discover this significance to some extent in the fact that Tennyson found Theocritus [1] congenial, that William Morris sought a theme in the epic of Apollonius, that Milton and Shelley and Arnold were moved by the tragic fate of Daphnis, that Rossetti's *Sister Helen* is a riddle partially solved by Theocritus' second idyl, that many a Hellenistic epigram has appealed to various poets of all ages and countries. But a full appreciation of modern literature will lead to a less superficial estimate of such significance. The period effects distinct changes in the content and form of classical literature; these changes bring the current of ancient literature nearer the main stream of modern literature. The permanence of the new tendencies is due not to the Hellenistic Greeks but to the Romans who conquered them. In the words of the latest essayist [2] on this theme: "As regards the progress of poetry, what gives the age its meaning is not that it was an age of decadence; it is that it was an age of difficult and delayed germination. The seeds of new life were under the surface. Out of a silver age, like that of Latin poetry under the Empire, nothing comes; it only dwindles away slowly and dies. But out of Alexandrianism came, with the touch of a new life in a new language, Latin poetry," and I may add, much of the form and content of Latin prose.

HENRY W. PRESCOTT.

[1] On the influence of Theocritus, cf. Kerlin, *Theocritus in English Literature*, Lynchburg, 1910; Stedman, *Tennyson and Theocritus*, in *Atlantic Monthly*, XXVIII, 513 ff.

[2] Mackail, *Lectures on Greek Poetry* (London, 1910); pp. 177–272 contain interesting chapters on Theocritus, Apollonius, and Alexandrianism.

GREEK INFLUENCE UPON LATIN LITERATURE

No serious student of Latin literature can fail to remark, very early in his study, the large number of paths which lead directly back to Greece and to the literature of Greece. It is almost a truism of criticism, even more in need of emphasis to-day than ever before, that to him who has no knowledge of Greek literature, Latin literature is a labyrinth without a thread. This fact would be borne in upon him by the contents of the Latin authors, even if he had no direct testimony from the Romans themselves. But in reality they were the first to acknowledge without reserve their indebtedness to Greece. Horace expressed this in a phrase which immediately became classic: —

> "Greece, conquered Greece, her conqueror subdued,
> And clownish Latium with her arts imbued."

But this was only a general acknowledgment without regard to the debt to individual authors. Plautus and Terence explained in their prologues that they had drawn largely upon the New Greek Comedy. Ennius claimed to be the reincarnation of Homer. Vergil referred continually in his *Bucolics* to the Sicilian Muse of Theocritus, and in the *Georgics* to the Ascraean bard, Hesiod. Lucretius was proud of his debt to Epicurus. Horace himself acknowledged the influence of the poets of the Old Greek Comedy. Propertius boasted that he was the Roman Callimachus, while Cicero acknowledged everywhere, particularly in his philosophical works, the utter dependence of Latin upon Greek. Quintilian in his famous survey of Latin literature does in-

deed rejoice that one department at least is wholly Roman, namely Satire, but in this he can be referring only to the form, for Horace had long before asserted the dependence of Lucilius upon the Old Comedy.

During the long darkness which brooded over the world from the sixth to the thirteenth centuries this dependence of Latin literature upon Greece was lost sight of completely; for to the Western world antiquity meant Rome alone and literature meant Latin. Greek influence was, it is true, not wholly absent, but it was the influence principally of philosophy, mathematics, and natural science, and it was exerted through the medium of Latin translations. The revival of learning brought again the possibility as well as the spirit of comparison, and scholars began at once to remark the great amount of Greek in Latin. Some German scholars in particular became so impressed by this influence that they came to regard Latin merely as a medium for the tradition of Greek culture, and Latin literature in itself as practically non-existent, while even those who did not go so far acquiesced in the view that Latin literature was a reflection of Greek, showing some power in a few respects, but with no national genius and no national form.

This controversy as to the merits of Latin *versus* Greek actually began very early. Upon the publication of the *Aeneid* of Vergil, envious critics began at once to cry down the new poet as a plagiarist of Greek motif and even of Greek expression. Succeeding critics, as late as the fourth century, busied themselves with compiling lists of Vergil's borrowings from Homer and other poets, quite oblivious of the truth of Vergil's own remark, when twitted with this fault, that, if his detractors would try it, they would find it easier to steal his club from Hercules than a line from Homer.

More recently the application of the spirit of scientific reasonableness has tended to qualify this wholesale depreciation of Latin originality, and a sounder view has come to

prevail in regard to the relative value of the Greek and Roman elements in Latin literature. It is my purpose to trace, as far as is possible in the time at command, the development of the chief departments of Latin literature, and to show how much of the Greek effect is due to the pouring of Greek fountains into an ever broadening but always Roman stream.

Latin literature is said to begin with the presentation about the year 240 B.C. of a play transfused from Greek originals by a certain Livius Andronicus, a Tarentine Greek, who bears the proud title of the "Father of Latin literature." But, according to tradition, when this play of Livius was presented, the city of Rome had been in existence for five hundred years. What had happened during those five hundred years? Had there been no literary beginnings at all? Without attempting to sketch the history of this period it may be said that the general course of development is clear. A small community on the Tiber, probably of various racial elements, devoted mainly to agricultural pursuits, but with an innate commercial tendency, was forced to maintain a continual struggle with surrounding tribes for existence. The great advantages of its location as a trading centre drew people to it from many quarters, but this very expansion caused many enmities, and more than once the community was compelled to leave its home at the mercy of the attacking force, whether Italian or Gallic. The extension of the Roman hegemony was very gradual, and it was three hundred years or more before the Roman name penetrated across the Adriatic Sea, or the Roman came into contact with the Greek outposts which had been planted along the coasts of lower Italy and the adjoining island of Sicily. Still another century was to elapse before the growing city dared to tempt the gods of the sea in ships — a measure not of peace but of war, and one which was destined to open the way for a very rapid development.

The history of these centuries shows little or no place for any attention to letters. They thrive not well within an armed camp, nor in the busy hum of the market-place, and during all this period Rome was but a combination of camp and market-place. The parallel between the Roman state and that of Sparta has often been made; in fact the characteristics are much the same. Life in both was an unending round of the sterner duties, and in both this left scant room for the smiling arts of culture. The history of Greek literature shows no great Spartan author during a period much longer than these five hundred years of Roman incubation, and we should accordingly not be surprised at even a total absence of literary tendency in the Roman state. But there is no such total absence. There are evidences, on the contrary, of vigorous literary growth. Indeed, nearly a century ago the theory was unhesitatingly advanced that this period was one of great literary activity. It was pointed out that the Homeric epic could not have sprung at once into being, no matter how scant the proof, or even indication, of the existence of a Greek literature before Homer's time. In like manner all the legendary stories that illumine the early pages of Livy's narrative require, it was said, the assumption of an epic period rich in literary elements, from which in due time a second *Iliad* would have come. No one now believes any such fantastic theory, for which we have no real foundation at all, but that there was much more than the beginnings of a national literature is abundantly evident.

Cicero refers in more than one passage, on the authority of Cato, to the fact that the early Romans at their banquets used to sing of the deeds of prowess of their great heroes, to the accompaniment of the flute. What the form of these songs was we have no means of knowing. They may have been extemporized. But there was abundant material for them, for it was customary for the great families to hand down from generation to generation accounts of the deeds of their

ancestors. Hence it is not unlikely that these gradually assumed a more definite form as they were sung again and again. There were also dirges sung at the funerals of great men, in which their great deeds were celebrated. The suggestion that these songs constituted lays in the Homeric sense is of course absurd, but they certainly contained the material for them. At religious festivals, songs in honor of the gods were chanted by the priests, and the need of records and of ceremonial observance made the priesthood literary even against its will. There were also charms, lullabies, and other forms of folk-poetry in abundance. I am leaving out of consideration decrees, religious formulas, and laws, all of which, properly considered, have a literary value. These may be taken for granted. The important point to notice is the abundance of the strictly literary material.

But there were other and more developed literary forms. Thus we have the so-called Fescennine verses, the existence of which has been traced as far back as the middle of the fifth century. These were rustic, impromptu verses of a bantering kind, common at marriages and in triumphal processions, where with the banter was frequently mingled indecent abuse. We have also a kind of composition called *Satura*, the first reference to which is connected with the plague of 365–364 B.C., when Etruscan performers were introduced into Rome to dance to music. The name *Satura* is due to Livy; the performance was probably a slightly developed form of the Fescennine verses, with less extemporaneous and more distinctly dramatic elements. There is also the *Fabula Atellana*, introduced about the beginning of the third century from Campania. This was a dramatic performance with stock characters, and represented the life of a country town. It has been compared to our Punch and Judy show, and represents a still higher type of dramatic development than the *Satura*.

In addition to the songs of the priests attempts at poetry of a higher order are found also in epitaphs, some of which

have come down to us from the early part of the third century.

The form in which all these productions were written seems to have been twofold. There is first of all the so-called Saturnian metre. Concerning the nature of this metre there has been a great deal of dispute; and scholars have been sharply divided, some regarding it as accentual, others as quantitative. In any case, however, it was distinctly Roman and has commonly been regarded as the one national Roman metre. Religious songs and epitaphs were written in Saturnians — possibly also the Fescennine verses. Other early fragments were written in a three-eighths measure, chiefly trochaic. The fact that the iambic-trochaic metre is the medium of so much that is written in Greek has blinded critics to another and far more important fact, that it is better adapted to Latin than to Greek and is the natural medium of Latin expression. Accordingly, no foreign influence is to be assumed to explain this form of early Latin composition.

After its five hundred years of incubation the Roman state had finally burst its Italian shell and emerged into the light of the outside world. It had begun a career of conquest, which in less than two hundred years was to put the nations under its feet and to establish a government which should weld the whole ancient world for centuries into a single state. The population of the city had also grown enormously; no longer was it necessary for all its citizens to be soldiers and to stand ready to take the field for the state. Its wealth had increased so that it was no longer incumbent upon every one to work for a livelihood. With wealth had come leisure, and with leisure the desire as well as the opportunity for a more highly developed means of amusement than had contented the less cultivated citizen. Individual culture and refinement were soon to follow upon wealth. It is almost impossible to appreciate fully the enormous expansion of the

Roman view during the third century. Contact with abutting nations had stimulated the Roman mind in every direction. It was not merely needs of the body that had to be satisfied, but needs of the mind as well, and the rate of growth during this century was so rapid that no native literary effort could keep pace with it. It was accordingly inevitable that this eager spirit should reach out in every direction for satisfaction. The nearest as well as the best that was offered to it was Greek, and this it grasped with intense eagerness.

Association with Greece had begun much earlier. The first contact probably came in the course of trade along the coast, as Greek vessels crept up to the Tiber's mouth. But the gradual expansion of Rome on land was inevitably to bring the Romans into contact with Greece, as the state pushed its arms toward the south. Cumae was the first Greek city to meet this movement, and in giving to the Romans the alphabet it forecasted the mighty rôle that Greek was to play in Latin literature. The first contact with the Greece of the mainland occurred in 280 B.C., when Pyrrhus sent his embassy from Epirus to Rome. After this event this contact became much more frequent, and we hear again and again of Greeks who spoke Latin and of Romans who spoke Greek. By the close of the First Punic War Rome was on terms of intimacy, not to say alliance, with the Italian Greeks. This association, however, was, in the main, political rather than social. But little interchange of ideas or genuine association of individuals can be discerned. Hence there is practically no trace of Greek influence upon Latin thinking or upon Latin literature until well on in the third century. As I have said, such literary elements as we can discern were distinctly Roman, rude as yet and uncouth, but with great possibilities of development if the opportunity were offered. Unfortunately this opportunity was not to be offered. The Romans demanded immediate results. This meant the absorption of Greek.

Three names stand out preëminently in connection with the third century, Livius Andronicus, Naevius, and Ennius; during the brief period which these three names span, the native Roman literature sank into obscurity, while Greek literature came to monopolize more and more the minds of literary Romans. Livius Andronicus was himself a Greek. Brought to Rome by the event of war, he established himself there and devoted himself to letters. In 240, at the request of the aediles, he brought out a play adapted from the Greek, for a performance at the public games. This was a new departure, not so much in metrical form — for, as I have said, the iambic-trochaic rhythm was genuinely Latin — but in organized and fully developed plot. As compared with the old *Fabula Atellana*, or *Satura*, its superiority could not but be felt immediately, and it seems to have met with great success. Thus encouraged Livius continued his dramatic work, particularly in tragedy, though we have indications of at least three comedies. The chief work, however, associated with him is a translation of the *Odyssey* of Homer, which became at once a school-book. To this fact Livius owed the place in Latin literature which he always held. As in the case of his plays, he used a Latin metrical form which had been already developed for the heroic lay, the Saturnian. He had neither the capacity nor the desire to transfer the Greek epic form. In this he showed good judgment, for it is doubtful whether a Roman audience would at this time have endured Greek form as well as Greek substance.

Naevius, his slightly younger contemporary, was an Italian, if not a Roman, with a versatile and active mind. But for external influence he would doubtless have made a great name in purely Latin composition. The fashion set by Livius, however, he was quick to follow, but he showed his distinctly Roman feeling, as well as the originality of his genius, by preparing, in addition to his adaptation of Greek

plays to the Roman stage, certain distinctly Roman plays in which the subjects were taken from Roman history and Roman legend. In some of these plays with Roman themes he showed himself a spiritual brother of Aristophanes by open criticism of his contemporaries, a practice which the Romans, in striking contrast to the Greeks, punished with imprisonment. In his advancing years he devoted his attention to the composition of a Roman epic on the First Punic War. This he naturally wrote in Saturnians. It was a rugged and uncouth poem which moved the laughter of Horace two hundred years later, but it was intensely Roman, strong, vigorous, serious.

Ennius, though slightly later than Naevius, belongs to this group because of the wide range of his work as well as by reason of his historical position. In temperament a cosmopolitan, with the ability to speak three languages, he added to this a cultivation possessed by neither of his predecessors as well as literary power of the highest order. He too followed the example of Livius and Naevius in adapting Greek comedy and tragedy for the Roman stage. In his tragedy he won a distinguished success, but as a comic poet he was a failure. The public at this time was composed mainly of the *vulgus ignobile*, and it is likely that his very cultivation made him ill-disposed to the kind of jest that would please such an audience. But Ennius's claim to fame does not rest upon his dramatic efforts. With his name is indissolubly connected the molding of the Roman tongue to the laws of the Greek hexameter. Perhaps under the influence of Naevius, but doubtless also from natural inclination, he set himself to write an epic of the history of Rome from its earliest beginnings in the period of misty legend and divine guidance. But he boldly abandoned the Saturnian measure of Livius and Naevius and came forward with a metrical form entirely new. The magnitude of his task can hardly be appreciated by a modern. We have often remarked the lack of

success with which English poets have tried to write English hexameters, but the genius of the Latin language was entirely anti-dactylic and Ennius had to develop an almost new vocabulary, and to modify the laws of Latin word-formation so as to make the stern and solemn Roman trip along like a nimble Greek. That he was not wholly successful, that many of his lines were crude, many of them rough, is not to be wondered at. The marvel is that he succeeded so well; for even in the hands of masters of rhythm like Vergil and Ovid the Latin hexameter never achieved the lightness and quickness of the Greek. With Ennius sets in the full tide of Greek influence. We have only to watch its flow.

This period, however, is preëminently the period of Roman comedy, which is represented chiefly by two names, Plautus and Terence, although of a number of other writers we have fragmentary remains. Plautus is in spirit the immediate successor of Naevius and thus stands in sharp distinction to Terence, who is related, spiritually, rather to Ennius. Plautus was an Italian, an Umbrian, who after a varied experience, mainly in mercantile pursuits, became a playwright and a manager, perhaps an actor. In seeking means of amusement for the public, he, like Naevius, had recourse to the vast mass of Greek material ready at hand in the New Comedy, whose chief representative was Menander. This material he used quite independently, combining, transforming, supplementing it as his histrionic feeling dictated. Of the twenty-one plays which have come down to us in more or less complete form every title is Latin, but the location and the plot are Greek. Sometimes he has combined two Greek plays into one, when the comic effect of one of them seemed too meager. The spirit of Greek comedy was distinctly un-Roman. The chief motif, illicit love, revolted the Roman sense of propriety. The position of the courtesan and the low esteem of the family relation were also distinctly un-Roman. The carelessness with which serious matters were

treated, the success that always attended upon knavery, the rôle played by the parasite and the pander, were utterly foreign to the Roman taste. But all this material provided abundant opportunity for comedy, and, inasmuch as it represented Greek manners and morals, for which the Roman had in general a profound contempt, not only was no umbrage taken, but many of the plays were extremely successful. A great part, however, of this success was unquestionably due to Plautus's own skill in devising comic situations, or to the purely Roman elements with which he amplified his originals. Plautus was not restricted by any considerations of dramatic technique. Unity of time and place did not worry him, nor did he, any more than Shakespeare, care about geographical details. To most of his auditors one Greek name was as good as another, and not one of his spectators cared whether Thebes was a seaport or not. On the other hand, a play where every allusion was Greek, every situation was Greek, would naturally soon pall upon a Roman audience. Consequently the plays of Plautus are replete with references to specifically Roman practices, situations, and events. The habits of the Roman market-place, the regulations of the Roman government, transactions among the Romans themselves, are played upon again and again. We even find the Roman *Lar familiaris* acting as tutelary deity to an Athenian household. Many characteristics of manners are also distinctly Roman. Thus the position occupied by some of the matrons is much above their corresponding position in Greece, and the severe and brutal treatment of slaves is essentially Roman rather than Greek. There is also an undercurrent throughout of that seriousness of mind which never forsook the Roman even in his lighter moments. There are numerous reflections on life and its problems, such as would hardly belong to a mere comedy of manners.

When we come to Terence, on the other hand, we find that his six plays all have Greek names, that the Roman

allusion and in general the whole Roman element have practically disappeared. While the thinness of the Greek plot made it necessary to combine two plays, almost no other liberty has been taken with the originals. There is, however, a marked distinction between Terence and Plautus, both in language and technique. Plautus is conversational and rugged, Terence is refined and polished. It is remarkable how much progress had been made in the development of the Latin polite style during the period between Plautus and Terence. The style of Terence is so pure, so clear, and yet so Latin that it was the subject of unreserved praise by the best critics of the Augustan Age. His friendship with the elder Scipionic circle gave rise to the suggestion on the part of his enemies that Terence, who was not a Roman, had not written these plays himself, but that they were the work of members of that circle in which were included the most refined and cultivated men of Rome. While this aspersion is undoubtedly false, it nevertheless serves to show the perfection of his style. In the general matters of technique Terence clung with great closeness to his Greek originals. The Roman element in his plays consists therefore solely in the language. Terence was not a popular author in the sense that Plautus was, that is, with the general public, although one of his plays, the *Eunuchus*, was extremely well received; but this play approaches more nearly to the Plautine spirit than any of the others. The very qualities that commended Terence to his cultured friends made him less popular with the people. Hence with him Roman comedy ceases to be a popular amusement and, as a consequence, dies.

During this period also, Roman tragedy had had a short and more or less fitful success. No complete plays have come down to us, but two great authors, Pacuvius and Accius, are referred to again and again. These poets restricted themselves almost entirely to Greek subjects and to Greek treatment. There are indications that they tried

Roman subjects occasionally, but their hearts seem not to have been in such themes. We are unable to form any clear idea of the structure of these plays. But the Roman element was unquestionably very slight. How successful they were in retaining popular approval it is also impossible to say. The fragments seem to indicate that the model was Euripides and that the problems of humanity were treated rather than the relations of God and fate to man. The appeal of Roman tragedy must have been primarily to the cultivated class. The ordinary public of Rome could have been interested only by a realism which was foreign to the Greek taste, and seems not to have been present in the Roman imitations. Tragedy, therefore, was never a popular form of literature among the Romans and in the Imperial Age became merely a rhetorical pastime. A collection of nine plays has come down to us under the name of the Younger Seneca. These treat Greek themes entirely; there is absolutely nothing Roman in them. Metrically some change has taken place. The Greek chorus has ceased to have any real part in the play and its place is taken by a number of odes after the manner of Horace, some of them extremely beautiful, but having little connection with the dramatic action. The characters are no longer Greek, to be sure, nor can they be said to be Roman. They are essentially mythical and unnatural. Their speeches are remarkable rhetorical productions, wrought out with extreme care. The horrors are always performed in open view, and the descriptions of incantation, witchcraft, and murder are morbidly terrible. There is great strength in much of Seneca's work, but it is obviously the production of the study, and is intended for recitation, not for the stage. This was inevitable, for under the Empire there was no chance at all for tragedy. Both the habits of the people and the spirit and regulations of the government precluded any freedom of composition. Literature was shackled.

The old dramatic *Satura*, which fell into disfavor under the tide of Greek influence when this set in so strongly with Plautus and Ennius, reappears in a different form in the work of Lucilius, who, like Terence, was a member of the Scipionic circle, but at a later date. Lucilius wrote thirty books of satire. The subjects treated embraced everything that might fall under the consideration of an intelligent and cultivated man. Being an Italian and of the equestrian order at Rome, his interest in Roman affairs was serious and patriotic. Nor was it confined to public life; it extended to matters of grammar, literary criticism, and social habits. The name Satire was originally applied to these occasional poems because of the variety of their contents, but, in discussing political matters at Rome, Lucilius allowed himself a freedom of criticism which reminds us of Naevius and recalls the mordant bitterness of Aristophanes. He thus attached to satire a characteristic which, though obscured in some measure in Horace and Persius, was to become dominant in Juvenal and thereafter in all satiric writing. In his earliest poems Lucilius employed the metres of comedy as well as the elegiac couplet, but he finally settled upon the hexameter as the best medium of expression. In this, too, he set the style for all subsequent work; for under this influence the heroic measure has become the vehicle of satire in English and French. But in spite of the Greek metre everything that Lucilius wrote was essentially Roman, and, so far as we can judge, Greek influence was conspicuously absent.

With Lucilius closes the pre-Ciceronian period of Latin literature. This period was essentially Roman in spirit. Greek influence was steadily increasing, to be sure, but the Roman element was everywhere predominant and the Greek material was used with an independence which was to be expected of men in whom the narrow national spirit was still supreme and who were just feeling their way toward

literature. It is significant that the Greek authors, imitated or translated, belong to the best period of Greek literature, the period of Homer, of tragedy and comedy. The Alexandrian literature had apparently made but little impression upon these sturdy writers. But now a change begins. The Romans cease to be Italian and become cosmopolitan. Education is tinged more and more with contemporary Greek thought. Leisure gives opportunity for learning. Reflection paves the way for philosophy. The problems of the growing state give way to those of an organized government, and with no concern for existence, the mind turns to the problems of existence. Hence it happens that when we reach the Ciceronian Age we find new influences at work, on the one side Greek philosophy as shown in Lucretius and the work of Cicero's advanced years, on the other the learned poetry of Alexandria as developed and molded by Catullus and more especially by Vergil.

Whether Lucretius is a greater poet than Vergil, or whether the Mantuan bard is to hold the first rank among Roman poets, has been a matter of controversy among scholars, but the question is not a serious one, because there is in reality but little ground for comparison. Their aims and methods are so different, their subjects so diverse, that they can be regarded as together occupying the highest peak of the Roman Parnassus. In one particular, however, Lucretius is antipodal to Vergil; he is Roman through and through. As I have indicated above, the old order was changing, and everything that had been regarded with veneration in Roman character and achievement was giving way before the invasion of cosmopolitanism, with its attendant carelessness of everything human and divine. The dominant note of the early part of the first century was bloodshed and cynicism. Lucretius, a man born out of time, had been intensely moved by the conditions of his age. We know nothing about his life (the dates even of

his birth and death are disputed), but we know in general that he was a contemporary of Cicero's youth, and we believe that he died at the age of forty-four and that his great poem was given to the world by Cicero. In the midst of the havoc and cruel rapine of his earlier years he had doubtless brooded long and deeply upon the problems of human life and the universe in which he lived. As an educated Roman he had gone to the sources of wisdom in the Greek philosophy, and apparently he had finally calmed the bitterness of his soul and stilled the yearnings of his heart by the adoption of Epicureanism, a system whose chief tenet in the conception of its founder consisted in the avoidance of everything that would disturb the mind, particularly in the denial of a life beyond the grave. "Epicureanism was not hedonism; it was rather a system of quietism," which must have appealed strongly to one who was burdened with the cares of a suffering world. Lucretius was thus a missionary on whose conscience was laid the duty of rescuing his fellow-men from the despair in which they found themselves. For the gospel that he preached he had recourse to Epicurus, but the form in which he clothed it was his own. What we have of Epicurus is a collection of shapeless literary crudities. The brilliancy of style which we associate with Greek was in him no longer existent. It is the glory of Lucretius that he took this uninspiring material and transmuted it into poetry, genuine poetry in substance and expression. Epicurus was his inspiration, but Greek didactic poetry was only very remotely his model. His passion, his pity, his sympathy, his keenness of vision, his boldness of imagination, his anticipation of modern scientific theories, his feeling for the immensity of nature — these are all his own. His physical facts are interpreted by the power of a divining fancy, and his appreciation of the high nature of man makes him essentially religious, even where he seems most atheistic. His form is the hexameter, but a hexameter as far superior to

that of Ennius and Lucilius as it was inferior to Vergil's. He handled it with conscious power but with a carelessness which regards it always as inferior to the thought it conveys. We find reminiscences of early Latin and the great Greek authors, but these are not imitations and show merely that he had steeped himself in the early literature. In thus doing he was acting, as I have said, quite out of harmony with the spirit of his times, for this was the age of the short poem, of the occasional clever skit, of the finely polished miniature, and the Romans who were his contemporaries had given themselves to this kind of mediocrity. Only one of them showed his genius in spite of it — Catullus.

In Catullus we find an intimate of the best circles at Rome, a debauchee, almost a roué, a man without settled purpose in life and without moral principle. If he professed any philosophy at all he was a follower of Epicurus, not the spiritual Epicurus of Lucretius but the sensual Epicurus of modern interpretation. To him enjoyment meant sensual delights, and he represents to the utmost the Rome of the period. In all essentials the work of Catullus is Greek. He domesticated in Latin the hendecasyllable, but he was also facile as well as effective in the handling of other metres. As a writer of pure song he is without a peer in Latin, and, while we may not agree with Mackail that he is one of earth's three lyric poets, the other two being Sappho and Shelley, his passion, melody, and lightsomeness raise him to the highest rank. It is remarkable that one trammelled by the fetters of Alexandrianism could have soared so high, and in this we perhaps see the Roman spirit of independence bursting the bonds of Greek conventionalism. We must remember that the Empire had not yet come to pass, that the domination of the Imperial system had not yet fully throttled independence, that literature was still not the handmaid of a master, but a partner in the house. Hence it is that a Roman in whose veins flowed the fire of a Celt could

rise beyond his Greek models and strike, particularly in the Lesbia poems, a note which in comparison with theirs was instinct with reality, with naturalness, and also with strength.

The most distinguished of the Roman poets, the one whose name comes immediately to the lips when Latin literature is mentioned, is Vergil. He is also that one poet about whom the dispute as to Greek influence has raged most fiercely. The *Aeneid*, the work of his mature years, came to be regarded immediately as the embodiment of the spirit of Rome. He deserves, as no other Roman author deserves, the epithet of national, for he voiced, as no other poet voiced, the destiny and glory of his country. Vergil's development in certain respects is remarkable. The great men of old, Naevius and Ennius, had found their inspiration in the great masters of Greek literature, but when Vergil grew up the dominating literary influence was Alexandrian. Vergil, perhaps naturally, was divided in his allegiance between the school of Alexandria and Lucretius. His first attempts at poetry are Alexandrian of the Alexandrians. He seems then to move backwards through the ages of Greek poetry, passing in his *Georgics* under the spell of Hesiod, up to his greatest work, which is so permeated with Homer that from the time of its appearance up to the present there has been a constant dispute as to whether he was to be allowed any original power at all. A shrinking, timid, perhaps cowardly, but withal intensely imaginative nature, Vergil essayed with unabated diffidence the tasks laid upon him. He seems to have believed always that his strength — if he had any at all — lay in the occasional piece, not in the sustained effort. But with years and work inevitably came power, and the man who in youth recoiled with trembling before the prospect of an epic, in his later years gave to Rome and to the world an example of finished beauty which has made subsequent authors his debtor and which is likely to retain its power as long as poets write. During the last half century of the Republic a certain

ideal of art had become as fully recognized in Rome as it had already been recognized in the later Greek period. This was, to sum it up in a word, the idea of literary inheritance. Recognizing frankly that the time when a poet could browse in an untouched field had passed, the writers of this age aimed to build their own structures upon the broad foundations of earlier genius. This principle has since dominated all artistic literature. The Romans were most fortunate in being heirs to only one foreign literature, as compared with ourselves, who, in addition to inheriting from many, are brethren at the same time to all our contemporaries and under manifold obligations to them. False, therefore, to the ideal of literary art was the poet who did not steep himself in all that had preceded before essaying anything of his own. Absolute originality was as impossible to a Roman as it is to a modern. What originality was possible had regard only to the spirit with which an author informed his work. Vergil in temperament was particularly susceptible to this principle of art, and we must therefore at the outset assume that his work will show many reminiscences of his predecessors, whether Greek or Roman, in phrase and metrical technique, as well as in the broader elements of theme and structure.

The works on which Vergil's fame rests are the *Bucolics*, the *Georgics*, and the *Aeneid*, all, it must be remarked, Greek titles. The *Bucolics* owe their inspiration directly to Theocritus and his Sicilian *Eclogues*. In Theocritus, however, the shepherds are real shepherds, and there is a glamour of verisimilitude over all that he describes. But shepherds were disappearing from Italian soil. The slave had taken the place of the freeborn husbandman, and in Vergil's poem the personages of the Sicilian muse seem strangely out of place. How artificial the whole species of poetry was may be gathered from the fact that Vergil felt no incongruity in commingling Italian with Greek features of landscape and

life. The resulting rural picture is such as could nowhere be discovered unless perchance in some artificial park where nature has been subjected to man's device. And yet as we read we wish that these pictures could be realized. We lose our sense of unreality in our enjoyment of the idyllic scene. We muse and dream and sing with Vergil and care not at all even if the Sicilian beech is made to spring from Mantuan soil, and the Sicilian mountain to rise out of Italian plain.

The discerning vision of Maecenas remarked the power of this youthful poet and suggested that he might further the plan of the *Princeps* for bringing back the Golden Age and recall the farmers to the soil by the witchery of his music. Under this influence Vergil wrote the *Georgics*, a glorification of labor and country life. Here his inspiration was frankly Hesiod, although he drew from numerous other sources, both Greek and Roman. Husbandry, vine-growing, cattle-breeding, bee-keeping, all those pursuits to which Italian soil is particularly adapted, are discussed in the four books of this treatise. A most unpromising subject, truly; and yet Vergil handled it in so masterly a manner that his work was not merely regarded by subsequent writers on agriculture as authoritative, but reached such a point of poetic beauty as to be the despair of all subsequent imitators. Farming details gave opportunities for story, description, or homily, which were always seized and brilliantly improved. We may be wearied by minute directions about homely matters, but we lose this weariness in our admiration for such brilliant passages as the combat of the bees, the Scythian winter, the myth of Orpheus, and the glorification of Italy. If Hesiod wrote for peasants, Vergil certainly could give delight to the most highly cultured country gentleman.

The *Aeneid*, the epic of Rome's national growth and destiny, was so evidently based on Homer that immediately upon its publication hostile critics drew attention to the many ob-

vious imitations. Homer was, it is true, not the only source from which Vergil drew. Close study of early Roman literature is everywhere indicated, and not merely the Homeric cycle, but some of the later romantic poets were laid under contribution. Still the *Aeneid* is essentially Homeric. In the composition of this poem Vergil showed clearly the limitations of his genius. By nature an episodic writer, he first sketched the plan of the work in prose, and then proceeded to elaborate those episodes which appealed to him particularly. There is therefore a great unevenness in the poem, for much that was necessary in the plan must have been singularly unattractive to the poet's soul. Still, emphasizing as much as we would the fact that the subject is borrowed, that much of the treatment is borrowed, we yet find throughout such a radical difference from the Homeric masterpiece that if we did not have Homer we should never suffer in our appreciation of the Latin poem. The simple, naïve Homeric image is not simple or naïve in Vergil. Homer's clear-cut vision appears in Vergil as a view in which all the elements of landscape are at once commingled. The straightforward story of Homer becomes in Vergil one that involves all that has gone before and all that is to come after in human destiny. The problem of life, which to Homer is clear, is in Vergil surrounded by the haze of speculative musing. The will of the gods, which in Homer determined arbitrarily the life of man, is in Vergil, despite his own desire, wrapped about with the yearning, the sufferings, and the wild endeavors of man. The central figure, Aeneas, is one that has never appealed to our modern feeling. At first sight he is an unreality, a shrinking spiritual phantasm, but, as we study him more closely, we see in him one who finds his highest delight in doing the will of God, but who at the same time never fails to be intensely human in sympathy, in tenderness, and in a melancholy which often verges close upon despair. Vergilian this is, not Homeric; Roman, not Greek. In

painting such a picture, Vergil must have been pouring out his own heart, and we shall not go far astray if we recognize in Aeneas Vergil's ideal man, formed upon himself as a model. The broodings of Aeneas are Vergil's broodings, the dreams of Aeneas are Vergil's dreams; Vergil himself would be brave as Aeneas is brave and Aeneas's weakness is Vergil's weakness. In striking contrast with the figure of Aeneas is that of Dido. Here Vergil's own ignorance saved him from failure, for, himself without experience of woman's nature, but wonderfully sympathetic and tender, he has drawn a picture of Dido which makes her easily one of the great women in literature, just because to the later romantic Greek model he has added those qualities of his own on account of which he was called Parthenios, the maidenlike. It is not necessary to go into a detailed study of the *Aeneid*. It is only to be emphasized that the spirit of the *Aeneid* is not Greek alone but Greek molded by the overmastering genius of a Roman, in whom were blended the traditions of the past and the breadth of view and philosophic insight of one who brooded over the affairs of men without being an actor therein.

The great representative of Roman cosmopolitanism and genial Epicureanism is Horace. Like other cultivated Romans he was trained from early youth in all the lore of the Greeks, and was engaged in completing his education in Athens at the time of the assassination of Caesar. His literary activity falls into three periods, which may be roughly designated the Roman period, the Greek period, and the world period. To the first belong the earlier poems, namely the *Epodes* and the *Satires*. In these he was distinctly Roman. Finding on his return from Athens the chief lines of literary work occupied by other men, he seems to have chosen for his special field satire of the Lucilian type. To this he was led also by the circumstances of his position and his own temperament. In the *Satires* he employs the hexameter, which, as we have seen, had been finally established by Lucilius

as the vehicle for this kind of literature. He had, however, experimented with other metres in the *Epodes* and so did not come to the hexameter until he had proved by experiment the inadequacy of any other metrical form. In his treatment of the hexameter, Horace, while not attaining to the finish of Vergil, represents a distinct advance over Lucilius. The tone and content of these writings are distinctly Roman, and, while there are occasional Greek illusions, they are not sufficient even to color the whole. At the close of his first period Horace had attained an assured position in the circle of Maecenas and in the favor of Augustus. It was doubtless at their suggestion that he directed his attention to lyric poetry, in which he soon showed himself to be a master. The way had been blazed by Catullus, but Horace's ambition reached much further, in fact to the complete domestication of the chief Greek literary forms in Latin. Alcaeus and Sappho were his immediate models and furnished the names for his chief metres. The subject-matter also was greatly influenced by Greek, while language and allusion keep us continually reminded of his masters. The last period, that of the fourth book of the *Odes* and the *Epistles*, is less Greek in form, but in subjects and in method of treatment he took his place by the side of Cicero in the evident desire to expound to his countrymen the principles of artistic composition as set forth by Greek teachers. Compared with Vergil Horace is always independently Roman, even in his most Greek period. Archilochus may have captured his fancy in his earlier years, and Aristotle was undoubtedly his chief source in his later works, but these men only furnished type and material; treatment and illustration are Horace's own. Even in his *Odes* his range of view goes far beyond that of the Greek lyric poets. Many of these poems show a curious similarity to the early *Satires*, and Horace's experience with the Bore, and his escape from the falling tree, are but two different expressions of Horace's own self. No

critic made haste to show Horace's indebtedness to his Greek originals, as happened in the case of Vergil. He was evidently a true Roman, working under the influence of his time, with full appreciation of social and political conditions, but with a keen sense of humor and an easy tolerance of human foible, which rendered him at once a poet of universal appeal, and explains why he has always had a host of readers to whom he was a friend, rather than a host of admirers to whom he was a great poet.

The Golden Age was also distinguished for the high development of another variety of literature, the elegiac. Elegiac couplets had been written by Ennius and by Lucilius, but it was reserved for the poets of this age, Tibullus, Propertius, and especially Ovid, to fix finally the sphere of the elegiac couplet as the expression of erotic sentiment. The Greek practice had varied considerably and this measure was used for warlike hymn or moral precept, for love-poem or drinking-song. It had in the later Greek writers, however, been given over particularly to love-poetry, and found its chief exponent in Callimachus. He formed the model of the Roman poets, and Propertius actually laid claim to being his Roman counterpart. Elegiac poetry in Rome was therefore artificial and intensely un-Roman, and, while it reached a technical perfection in Ovid such as it had not reached among the Greeks themselves, the metre nevertheless never came to be regarded as national in the same way that the hexameter did.

I have said nothing at all about the development of prose, and yet prose, like poetry, has a history. In the earliest times records were kept by priests and public officials as well as by private families. These constitute the first attempts at Latin prose. The most famous example is the Laws of the Twelve Tables, which show even in their modernized form both the power and the limitations of legal Latin, and even thus early foreshadow the future greatness of this form of literature.

Of the three great departments of Latin prose — oratory, history, and philosophy — only the last named shows any strong Greek influence except in form. The early Romans had neither time nor inclination to philosophize, and it is only in the last century of the Republic that philosophy obtained literary treatment at Rome. The chief prose-writer is of course Cicero. His philosophical treatises were written in his old age, partly to relieve his mind from sorrow and care, partly from the teacher's instinct, which seems to have been always latent in every Roman. Cicero desired to put Greek philosophy within reach of the Roman public. He shows in his works little evidence of original thinking, but his Greek material is treated from the Roman point of view and the wealth of illustration is entirely his own.

Oratory and history go hand in hand. Success in public life at Rome required from the earliest times the ability to speak. A democratic assembly is ruled more by the emotion of the moment than by the dictates of quiet reason, and the history of Rome is at the same time a history of Roman oratory. The publication of speeches goes back as far as Appius Claudius, the Censor, but in these early days natural ability took the place of training, and it was not till the time of Cato the Elder that the need of training was felt. It was at this time that the influx of Greek teachers of rhetoric into Rome provided in the activities of the *Grammatici* a kind of secondary education of a high grade, which involved instruction in Greek literature, rhetoric, and oratory. Even the Hellenophobe Cato, in the treatise which he composed for his son's instruction, found it necessary to draw from Greek models, especially Demosthenes, for his illustrations. At this time rhetoric in Greece was in much the same position as poetry. The Asiatic style was dominant, and this corresponded to the Alexandrian style in poetical composition. Art had taken the place of subject-matter, and, whereas before this time teachers of rhetoric had aimed to reproduce

the style of Lysias, with its clearness, its brevity, its delicate handling of sentence-structure and its discrimination in the choice of words, as well as its lack of adornment beyond what really belonged to the material and the subject, we now find exuberance, redundancy, conceits in the use of words, and such a fulsome employment of pedantic and bombastic imagery and metaphor that the idea is often almost entirely obscured by the expression. Such a style could not appeal to a normal Roman, and, just as the earlier period of Latin literature recalls to us the noble age of Greek literature, so Roman orators imitated the Attic canon and were but little attracted to the vagaries of the Asiatic system. The education, however, of a Roman youth who expected to qualify for public life involved a careful study of all the principles of rhetorical technique in which the Greek teachers were such evident masters. And we have a detailed account of the length to which that study could go in Cicero's recital of his own training. In Cicero's youth the chief position in Roman oratory was held by Hortensius in succession to the two great orators of the previous generation, Antonius and Crassus, all names familiar to us from Cicero's own treatises. Their style, the so-called Attic, is best exemplified for us in that style which we have come to associate with the name of Caesar. Cicero's youthful enthusiasm at once pitted him against Hortensius, from whom he was shortly to wrest his glory. His own nature, being in startling contrast with the Caesarian type, naturally inclined him to an exuberant and somewhat redundant style, where rhetorical artifice was subject only to an inherent good taste which was to make itself more and more effective in subsequent years. In the early speech for Roscius of Ameria, Cicero appears as an Asiatic, restrained and modified by the limitations necessarily imposed by a Roman audience. This speech, probably the most brilliant speech delivered up to that time by a Roman, shows at once a finish and an elaboration such as had not yet been known

in Latin. When it is compared with early Roman efforts, the result of Greek training is at once evident in the careful structure of the period, the effective handling of antithesis, anaphora, and chiasmus, the balancing of clauses, assonance, repetition, asyndeton, and many other devices. There is also a redundant exuberance which Cicero himself criticized in his later years, but which he never entirely avoided, or deemed it desirable to avoid. If we compare with this speech the greatest of his oratorical efforts, namely the *Second Philippic*, we find the same general characteristics, tempered and modified by a life of careful thinking and experimentation. In Cicero's style, however, perhaps the most important element is the care which he devoted to the cadence at the close of sentences, that rhythm which distinguishes his speeches from ordinary prose as well as from verse. It is Cicero's glory that by the action of his versatile Italian intellect upon the rules of Greek technique he molded a Latin style which, as a medium of artistic expression, has never been surpassed and was destined for centuries to be the model of the world.

The development of historical writing at Rome was much the same as that of oratory. In many cases the writers of history were at the same time great political leaders. History, however, differed from oratory, from drama, from epic in that it was to be read rather than listened to. Accordingly some of the earliest of the Latin historians thought to provide for the permanence of their reputation by writing in Greek. But this pedantic attitude was of short duration and the native Latin soon asserted itself. Stylistically the development followed the course of oratory and there was the same conflict in later times between the adherents of the Asiatic and the Attic systems of rhetoric. In the Golden Age the chief representative of the Attic style, both in oratory and history, was Caesar, and the best example of this style is to be found in the *Commentaries*. Educated in all the devices of the rhetoric of the period, like Cicero a student

of Molo, the noted teacher of Rhodes, Caesar was nevertheless deterred by the peculiar cast of his mind from that careful consideration of the means of expression to which Cicero had devoted himself. He wrote as he fought, we are told, and as Cicero reached the summit of success in oratory, so Caesar in narrative reached a point of excellence which well merited the approbation of Cicero and all subsequent critics. In Caesar we have a style that is essentially Latin, not Greek. He shows, to an extent attained by perhaps no other Latin writer, the domination of the Roman over his instrument. Rhetorical devices are everywhere evident, but these are the result of unconscious reminiscence, not of design. The effect of Caesar's language is due to the man, not to the words themselves. His work was absolutely bare of adornment, *nudus* as Cicero calls it, but it was unadorned beauty, *renustus*, as Cicero also calls it, the admiration and the despair of those who read it.

Contemporary with Caesar was Sallust. He, too, had undergone the same training as other men of his time, and after a checkered public career had devoted himself to the writing of history. As Vergil and Propertius had claimed to be the Theocritus and the Callimachus of their country, so Sallust aimed to be the Roman Thucydides. That he fell far short of his model is not to be wondered at. He had not the genius of Tacitus. But to him perhaps even more than to Thucydides history meant the study of movement rather than the narrative of facts. Events were to be traced back to their causes in the nature of man. Thucydides may have been the father of the philosophy of history, but without the mediation of Sallust his influence would not have gone beyond the Greek boundaries, and if the later development of history paid more and more attention to evolution, this was due to Sallust's study of his model. In his actual composition Sallust shows but little Greek influence. We find in his writings manifold traces of his familiarity

with early Roman literature, and he merits perhaps the name of the first literary archaist in Rome. Old phrases, old turns of expression, old constructions, old words came as naturally to him as the forms of Shakespeare and the Bible have come to many a modern writer. As a result the style of Sallust was peculiarly Latin, and one which after a generation profoundly affected subsequent writers, particularly those of the Silver Age.

It were idle to trace the Greek influence at Rome beyond the great authors of the Golden Age. With these it culminated and, broadly speaking, ceased. To subsequent authors the literary heritage was neither Greek nor Latin, but Graeco-Roman, and this influence was not merely potent in the case of strictly Roman authors but among later Greek authors as well. When we analyze the style of a Tacitus, a Seneca, a Quintilian, a Pliny, we are led back not to Greek but to Roman sources.

Our study of the movements of Latin literature should have convinced us by this time of the essential unreality of Horace's famous epigram. When Rome enslaved Greece, she also made Greek literature her handmaid. In the speech which Sallust in the *Bellum Catilinae* puts into the mouth of Caesar, he is represented as saying with regard to Roman character: "Anything serviceable noticed among allies or enemies was followed up at Rome with the utmost eagerness; men preferred to copy rather than to envy good ideas." And nowhere is this characteristic more evident than in the domain of literature. It is usually maintained that Greece gave to the world the various literary types, but Rome had her epic and her drama, her oratory and her history, before her contact with Greece — rudimentary to be sure, but instinct with life. And through all the history of Roman literature after the so-called Greek invasion, we see the independent Roman genius molding the material to suit its needs. None of the great works of Latin literature

would have been possible to a Greek. Even the greatest Philhellene of them all, Vergil, never ceased for a moment to be Roman, and the *Aeneid*, despite its origin, is a Roman poem. The destiny of Rome, which Vergil declares in the famous lines

> **Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento**
> **(Hae tibi erunt artes), pacisque imponere morem,**
> **Parcere subiectis et debellare superbos,**

could never have been penned by a Greek. The very conception would have been beyond the power of any Greek leader, even a Pericles. When the Roman came to his full stature and, recognizing the greatness of his destiny, took measures to prepare himself therefor, he chose for his teacher Greece, but Greece did not choose for her pupil Rome. Greek literature remained always to the Roman his most dearly prized slave, but none the less his slave. Properly considered this reflects no discredit upon Greece or upon Greek literature. On the contrary, to have had the molding of the most imperial race that up to this time had appeared in the world was no mean glory. And to that must be added the fact that the Greek spirit, which died in Greece when Greece lost its freedom, combining with the Roman spirit, formed in union a force which has always been equal to all demands, and which has directed the course of civilization up to this day. Even now this combined spirit, though unmarked, dominates every department of human intellectual progress; and though it may suffer eclipse for a time by the ignorant and commercial spirit of modern philistinism, it will again shine forth to illumine the path of human destiny.

GONZALEZ LODGE.

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